

THE SPOIL

A POEM

IN EIGHT CANTOS.

BY

One in the Service.

THIS SIR IS SOLDIERING, HOW DO YOU LIKE IT?—*Jones.*

DFO DUCF, FERRO COMITANTE

HONOUR'S TRAIN
IS LONGER THAN HIS FORE SKIRT.—*Shakespeare.*

SECOND EDITION.

CALCUTTA :

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1843.

TO

MAJOR GENERAL SIR EDMUND KEYNTON WILLIAMS,

K C B ETC ETC.

The Following Poem

IS BY PERMISSION MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

HIS VERY HUMBLE, OBLIGED, AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE Author of the following Poem submits with much diffidence his first literary production to the Anglo-Indian Public. The labour of several months, during which its progress was often interrupted by the duties of his profession, and, even at those intervals which fortune allowed him, executed under peculiar disadvantages, amidst the tumults of a barrack-room, and while suffering (being as yet unclimatized) from the excessive heat of the atmosphere, it can scarcely be expected that therein perfection should be found: and if to these unpropitious circumstances be added the Author's want of experience and of a critical knowledge of the rules of that science in the application of whose principles he aspires to proficiency, it may be thought somewhat remarkable if mediocrity is discovered to have been attained. On the candour and generosity however of an enlightened though limited community he would cast himself, with all his youthful hopes, confident his little bark will not be permitted to founder beneath the hurricane of severe and rigorous criticism. And surely, if the meritorious design of a work may excuse its imperfect execution, the Author may in this instance plead for an extenuation of the faults of his production.

It is a lamentable truth, and one by him poignantly felt, that however as a body the Army may be honoured, however highly as a profession it may be esteemed, the individuals who compose its lower ranks are almost universally slighted and despised. It is unnecessary here to examine the causes of this so sad yet so undeniable a fact : but it is not so to propose and seek to administer to the public mind a remedy for the disease with which in such a case it is evident it must be infected. To lay before the view, to bring under immediate observation the military character, to display the trials and sufferings with which the soldier has to contend,—to point out the traits which distinguish the warrior through life, and exhibit the generosity, the energy, the activity of his mind, the patriotic zeal by which it is inflamed, the perseverance with which it is armed, and the determination which renders it inflexible,—this seemed to the Author a mode of treatment adapted to cure. At the same time that he resolved therefore to attempt himself to be in this case the physician, it was his desire also to alleviate the pangs of discontent, to pluck out the barb so often found to wrangle in the bosom of the hero of far-famed fields, and mollify the wounds which agonize the hearts of the expatriated. If one hundredth part of his wishes be realized he will be gloriously rewarded.

In the execution of his plans, the Author deemed it requisite to follow the soldier from the period of the commencement of his military career to that of his retirement from the Service ; and here the idea suggested itself, that an illustration of the causes which in a majority of cases lead to the Army would not be misplaced : to this therefore he has almost exclusively devoted

the first Canto. And let those (if any such there be) who deem the hero's story wild and improbable, know, that the Author has been taught by observation in the school of experience. The second and third Cantos display scenes through which the soldier intended for the East Indian Service generally passes preparatory to being incorporated with his corps; and it is hoped that the detail of military exercises and duties, which forms the subject of the succeeding portion of the work; will not be found entirely uninteresting, when it is remembered, that on perfection in these depends the efficiency of the Army and of every individual composing it. The ever-memorable siege of Bhurtpore in 1826 is made the scene of the hero's *debut* on the field of action. Adequately to pourtray the various brilliant incidents of this refulgent operation, and exhibit in all its splendour so glorious a spectacle, was a task far beyond the powers of the Author's humble and uninitiated muse. Yet as it has not hitherto been commemorated in verse, (so far as his personal knowledge extends,) he could not prevail on himself to resign the attempt. Should he be blained for expressing too strongly, in the sixth Canto, sentiments which may be deemed somewhat bold, he would beg it may be remembered that he is not himself the hero of the piece, and that he only declares the almost universal opinion of the whole Army. In the seventh Canto is introduced the important campaign of the Brito-Indian Army beyond the Indus in the years 1839 and 1840. The Author regrets that the plan of his work would not allow the introduction of the tragedies which have of late been enacted in the North-West. He has determined however, should the Public so far encourage him as to call for a second edition

of this work, “ *and should opportunity be afforded him,*” to add an episode comprising the whole. In conclusion, the eighth Canto accompanies the veteran soldier to his native land, where, basking in the smile of peace, he stands forth the champion—in argument, as of yore in bloody contest—of his country.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN returning his grateful thanks to the Anglo-Indian Public for the patronage they have kindly bestowed on the first edition of this work, the Author has to express his regret that his duties on the campaign which has just now terminated, and a multitude of other engagements, have prevented him from fulfilling his expressed intention of adding an episode on the late performances, and the disasters of the Affghanistan Army. These however may yet be given to the Public.

Delhi, Feb. 18th, 1843.

C A N T O 1.

ARGUMENT

PROLOGUE—INVOCATION TO APOLLO AND THE MUSES—ROCHESTER—CHATHAM
—THE HERO—HIS TALL—LIFE AND DEATH—EARLY PASSION—YOUTHFUL
/ SPRINGS—MARTIAL SYMPTOMS—DISAPPOINTED LOVE—ENLISTMENT

“ DID I love ? Be my witness, high heaven,
That mark'd all my frailties and fears,
I adored—but the magic is riven
Be the memory expung'd by my tears ! ”

“ I fly, like a bird of the air,
In search of a home and a rest
A balm for the sickness of care,
A bliss for a bosom unblest ”

“ Oh ! land of my fathers and mine,
The noblest, the best, and the bravest,
Heart-broken, and lorn, I resign
The joys and the hopes which thou gavest ”

BYRON



The Soldier.

CANTO I.

HAIL, monarch of the world ! resplendent star !
Pride of the universe ! Imperial WAR !
Whose mighty arm resistless wields the fate
Of trembling millions who thy mandate wait ;
Whose frowns the rage of struggling kingdoms quell ;
Whose smiles stern care from regal brows dispel ;
Disease whose viceroy, and whose premier Wealth,
Whose slave is Fortune, and whose handmaid Health,
Whose wide domains the universe embrace,
And in whose deeds a demi-god we trace !

O thou who dost th' ambitious Muse inspire,
Attune, divine Apollo, now my lyre ;
Teach me to touch with grace each nervous string,
While I the hero and *the Soldier* sing !
The Soldier, born of war ! whose home, the world !
Whose pride, the sword unsheath'd, the flag unfurl'd !
Whose fearless soul is fir'd with martial flame,
And craves ablution in the fount of Fame !
O ye retiring fair, ye virgin Nine,
Who 'midst the bow'rs of Helicon recline, 20
Ye whose transcendent charms enchant the grove,
Admit me where, 'mid fragrant shades, ye rove.
O may I quaff the pure Castalian fount
Fed by the snows which cap Parnassus' mount,
And as its spirit animates my soul
The Soldier pant as years around him roll !

Yonder, where rise in frowning grandeur high
The massive tow'rs whose outline we espy,
Rear'd by the Norman king, a fortress stands,
Whose mossy ruin silent awe commands :
'Tis *Rochester*, and yonder rapid stream,
Whose turbid waves absorb the solar beam,
The Medway, on whose bosom silent sleep

An host, whose thunders oft have rous'd the deep.
There busy Chatham lifts her care-worn brow,
The rendezvous of Jews, crimps, seamen, woe ;
And lo, on yonder hill in stately pride
The mansions where the sons of Mars abide !
Behold a group from yonder copse emerge
Who widely from the beaten path diverge— 40
Their manly forms, their martial costume, air,
The *Briton* and the *warrior* each declare !
They talk of distant scenes, of youthful days,
The joys of love, the sweets of friendship praise.
Mark him who leads the way, of aspect bold,
And stately form of true Corinthian mould,
Whose lofty brow declares th' aspiring soul,
Whose flashing eye, the mind born to control,
Upon whose lip determination dwells,
Whose heaving breast with martial fervour swells !
He paints the future—glowingly portrays
The mighty deeds of yet far distant days,
And in perspective hails the bright array
Of valiant armies marshall'd for the fray !

He ceases, and with one consent they seek
The inn, refreshment of the host bespeak,

Obtain a luncheon, and, as round they pass
In cheerful mood th' exhilarating glass,
Of him, our chosen hero, claim a tale—
His history (o'er which there hangs a veil) ! 60

"To-morrow, comrade," cry they, we must part—
Embrace the moment as the time is short,
And ere thy fortune bears thee o'er the wave
To share the toils and dangers of the brave,
Grant to our fellowship this boon, impart
Thy young career, who, whence, and what thou art.

"Since I to-morrow bid you all farewell,"—
Thus he replied, "my story I will tell."

"'Midst fertile vales where crystral Avon flows,
A scene of calm delight and rich repose,
Some twenty years ago I op'd mine eye,
And hail'd a life we only know to die.
My father, pastor of the village, bless'd,
My tender mother fondly me caress'd,
And both rejoic'd in me their first born son,
In whom their future cares and hopes were one !

'Midst cheerful scenes I pass'd mine infant days,
Of all my joys most sweet my parents' praise,

Th' unconscious innocence of childhood mine,
Earth was to me a Paradise divine,
In whose transporting fields I wander'd free,
And pluck'd delicious fruits from ev'ry tree.
But ah, how transient is all earthly bliss,
How vain our joy, how brief our transport is !
E'en as I bask'd in ecstasy's bright ray
A gloomy cloud obscur'd the rising day ;
My sire fell victim to the tyrant Death,
My mother mourning, yielded up her breath,
And I was left deserted and forlorn
To weep the fatal hour when I was born !

80

Near our abode liv'd one whose warlike name
Is found recorded on the lists of Fame,
Whose arm had wielded in his country's cause
For thirty years the sword, and now its laws
To us dispens'd as Justice of the Peace.
The friend of both my parents, their decease
Thus in life's prime he heard with genuine grief,
And flew in zealous haste to my relief.
With kind control he bade me dry my tears,
And with parental fondness hush'd my fears,
Bore me to his abode, provided well

100

For my immediate wants, sought to dispel
The cloud which veiled in gloom my infant brow,
And bade me him my future guardian know !

Tho' rich, he scorn'd the haughty airs of wealth,
And more than thousands priz'd the smile of Health ;
If proud 'twas of his child, a daughter, fair,
Of tender years, engrossing all his care,
The only relic which remained of all
Who oft did him their tender parent call.
These death had snatch'd away, and she, whose womb
Had giv'n them birth, soon follow'd to the tomb ;
The wretched spouse and father, thus bereft,
Found in this babe the only solace left.

With her I now divided all his care,
His fond affection proud with her to' share,
In the exuberance of my spirits, I
Soon ceas'd to mourn, and dry'd my flowing eye.
Constant companion of the young Jennett,
Our youthful friendship taught us to forget 120
Our woes, which form'd it seem'd a tie that wound
Itself our young and tender hearts around.
As years rolled on and I in stature grew
In peaceful ease we liv'd nor evil knew ;

Instructed by my tender guardian's care
 In those acquirements which the mind prepare
 For active life, I oft rejoic'd to find
 My studies and Jennett's pursuits combin'd :
 Oft too we wander'd 'midst our native vales,
 Together sketch'd, and woo'd the balmy gales,
 Or seated in a neighb'ring grotto sang,
 While secret caves a merry chorus rang !
 I felt to her a brother's glowing love,
 And she would oft a sister's kindness prove !
 Thus budded in the genial spring of youth
 The plant now blighted, crush'd, torn up forsooth !

Our mutual parent (by adoption mine)
 To our attachment did his ear incline,
 Would in our youthful projects smiling join,
 Nor, by sage worldly prudence guided, e'er
 Rebuked by angry word or look severe.
 Yet well he knew how thrive in such a soil
 The seeds of passion, when with ceaseless toil
 Fair circumstance attends ; but sanguine, he
 Could in our future union foresee,
 Virtue and Honour link'd with Wealth and Fame,
 A union which his full consent might claim !

My proud ambition always to excel,
To win the prize which to a victor fell,
A vig'rous mind and fi'ry temp'rament,
A soul on deeds of enterprize e'er bent,
And all these guided, govern'd, and controll'd
By his command, evinc'd a warlike mould.
In me a future Marlbro' he beheld,
His flatt'ring fancy no success withheld,
A Cato's, a Lucullus' genius, gave
As mine the highest guerdon of the brave !
Oft would he dwell on scenes of by-gone days,
And chaunt the ancient minstrel's martial lays,
With warmth enthusiastic oft recite
The deeds of warriors in the battle fight,
Pourtray the scene where rival hosts engage,
And all the arts of dire destruction wage ;
The clash of swords heard 'midst the cannon's roar,
The iron storm ne'er ceasing Death to pour ;
The piercing shriek, th' exulting victor's shout,
The equal balance and the mighty doubt,
Th' intrepid charge, the vanquish'd foe's retreat,
The joys which the returning victors greet ;—
And cry, his soul by recollection fir'd
And by the genius of War inspir'd,

“ My son, be it thy choice the sword to wield,
Go gather laurels on the tented field,
Beauty shall cheer thee with approving smile,
Renown and Glory recompense thy toil !”

How would his accents thrill mine inmost soul,
Urge my ambition on to spurn control,
And cause to blaze the spark that glow'd within
E'en till I panted for the battle's din !
And when to celebrate the glorious day 180
Of victory, he don'd his field array,
What envious rapture fill'd my throbbing breast,
As I gaz'd on the dazzling helmet's crest !
How thirsted I to clutch the glitt'ring blade,
And try my prowess on the op'ning glade,
To wield the lance, the flying foe pursue,
And prove myself a loyal knight and true !

Meanwhile I made the glorious art my theme,
By day my boast, my midnight's rapt'rous dream,
Complain'd impatient of the tedious hours,
And long'd to quit my peaceful native bow'rs,
Tho' in Jennett I saw a conquer'd world
When she the banner of her smiles unfurl'd !

How throbs mine heart as I those days recal
When the bright future was my all in all ;
When hope spread forth a banquet rich and rare,
The blush of Love, the warrior's fame my share :—
I was deceiv'd ! woe lurk'd in ambush where
My path appear'd from all obstruction clear :
And all these joys soon faded from my view, 200
E'en as the brilliant rainbow's varied hue !

'Tis now three years since, wand'ring with Jennett
One morn, we in our path a stranger met,
Who, bowing, ask'd the road he must pursue
To reach the village (then lost to our view).
His course we pointed out, our walk resum'd,
Pluck'd a few flow'rs which in their season bloom'd,
And when announc'd the cheerful matin peal
That all was ready for our early meal,
With hasty steps sought our embower'd home,
Impatient yet again abroad to roam.

Scarce were we seated at the grateful board,
E'er in our ears a stream of tidings pour'd ;
The only son of our provincial squire,
Who when a youth had left his home and sire,

Had, after wand'ring o'er the spacious earth,
Return'd unto the scene which gave him birth ;
The fatted calf was slain, and all was joy,
The father once more saw his darling boy !

Invited by the squire we sought the hall, 220
And early join'd the merry festival,
Applauded the affection of our host,
Beheld the son whom 'twas his pride to boast,
And in that son, his first and only born
There recogniz'd the stranger of the morn !

He sought our side, express'd in courteous phrase
That sentiment which so much grace conveys,
And ere he left us, ventur'd to demand
The honour in the dance of Jennett's hand :
'Twas yielded ; and when rosy Bacchus claim'd
His worship, as his toast Jennett he nam'd ;—
That hour an epoch form'd in my career,
That night the fountain op'd of many a tear !

Scarce was it noon on the succeeding day
Ere flatt'ry's off'ring he called in to pay :
Thenceforth a constant visitor became
Who smiles from all save me might ever claim :

For in my breast a spark was kindled now
Fann'd by his presence, till its fervid glow
Would drive to madness my impassion'd soul, 240
Its energies excite beyond control !
On me Jennett no longer deign'd to smile,
Her sweetest accents seem'd the voice of guile,
And all her charms but as an off'ring made
The god to whom she now devotion paid !
Had he presum'd, my rival I'd defied,
'When Jennett smil'd on him I only sigh'd ;—
'Twere vain methought to struggle for a prize
Which scarce retain'd its value in mine eyes,
Tho' 'twere the gem whose lustre could alone
Dispel the darkness o'er my dest'ny thrown !

Thus lost to me the only charm of home
I restless oft to distant scenes would roam,
Essay'd to drown in senseless mirth my grief,
With vain companions sought to find relief,
And quaff'd insensate the o'erflowing bowl,
To quench the flame that rag'd within my soul !

My guardian with surprise and deep regret
Observ'd my chang'd demeanour when we met,

And with paternal kindness sought to know 260
The secret cause of such apparent woe.
My absence' cause too oft would he inquire,
And manifest the sorrow of a sire,
But I forbore to yield direct reply,
And proudly met his fond enquiring eye !

Yet was I startled when Jennett's pale cheek
And searching glance a stern reproof would speak,
But when I saw the hated gallant near,
I e'en return'd it with a bitter sneer,
And rush'd forth to the haunts of lawless mirth,
To give my raging imprecations birth !
Then lost in dissipation, I prolong'd
My stay where Bacchanals and harlots throng'd,
Rivall'd the profligate devoid of grace,
And flew impetuous to the hir'd embrace ;
Deep draughts of wine unceasingly I quaff'd,
And at the jest licentious madly laugh'd,
While demons seem'd to goad my panting soul,
And every passion to defy control !

In vain my guardian to reclaim me sought, 280
With reason I had also banish'd thought,

I had imbib'd the fatal Stygian stream,
Life was a vision, all around a dream.
The homage once alone to beauty made
To wine was now idolatrously paid,
The abject slave of Bacchus I became,
Chain'd to his chariot, gloried in my shame,
Till base devotion to the god to prove,
I on his altar sacrificed MY LOVE !

Why should I dwell on scenes so hideous now,
On days of darkness, months of frenzied woe ?
Suffice it that my once indulgent sire
Unable longer to repress his ire,
One morning summon'd me as I awoke,
With stern upbraidings our long silence broke,
Bade me reform—my past misdeeds retrieve,
Or of my presence his abode relieve :—
With base ingratitude and proud contempt,
Thirsting to be from all control exempt,
I spurn'd his counsel and with instant voice 300
Declar'd the last alternative my choice.
“ Go then,” he cried, “ rash and presumptuous youth,
But hear, ere thou depart, a word of truth.
I lov'd thee once as loves a sire his son,

E'en as his first-born and his only one ;
 I gaz'd with pride upon thy warlike form,
 Thy spirit born to battle with the storm,
 And fondly hop'd that Fortune would unite
 The lovely maiden to the valliant knight !
 Vain, vain illusion, now does time unfold
 The mighty cheat, and I, alas ! behold
 That martial spirit on a cat'ract wreck'd,
 That brow with ivy 'stead of laurels deck'd,
 And mourn the fond deceit which taught to glow
 With joy, the heart that throbs with anguish now !”

“ Mourn not, my father,” rising, cried Jennett,
 “ But strive one so unworthy to forget.”
 “ To you,” she said, and bent on me her eye,
 “ It but remains with speed from hence to fly :
 Yet, ere you quit for evermore the scene, 320
 A moment stay ; experience, wisdom, glean !
 I never lov'd your fancied rival, ne'er
 On him bestow'd a single thought or care ;
 Yours was mine heart, but I resolv'd to prove
 The strength, the zealous fervour of your love.
 Anon the stranger came, and I beheld
 Its touchstone ! while my favour was withheld,

And oft a tear would in mine eye conglob,—
The depth of passion in thine heart to probe
I smil'd on him when thou wert near !—I found
By thy deport thy boasted love unsound !
Methought thou would'st have struggled for the prize
Of such transcendent value in thine eyes,
And strain'd a nerve to outstrip in the race
One slipp'ry e'er of foot and slow of pace.
I saw thy rage, thy enmity, thy scorn,
But these were brief, were transient as the morn ;
Plung'd in the deep, o'erwhelming, stormy sea
Of wine, they rose no more, but ceas'd to be !
Yet in this fallen, this degraded state, 340
Still more didst thou thy falsehood aggravate,
The filthy courtezan's embraces sought,
And revell'd in caresses gold had bought !
This thou hast done, aye, thou, so much mine own—
Hence, hence, perfidious wretch, begone, begone !”

Bound while she spoke, and rooted to the spot,
For such disclosures I expected not,
I left the mansion with a throbbing heart,
And felt that I had play'd an idiot's part :
I saw myself an outcast, scorn'd, despis'd

By her whose love I once so highly priz'd ;
I saw the guardian of my youth in tears,
My misdeeds adding to the weight of years
And bowing him unto the grave ; I saw
Conscience the portrait of my vices draw,
Swinish excess with brutal passion join'd,
Ingratitude and perfidy entwin'd !
Arous'd my slumb'ring soul—once more the light
Of truth I saw burst o'er dark error's night,
My spirit shook her wings as day return'd, 360
Again my breast with martial ardour burn'd,
And as I bade those scenes a long farewell
Once Paradise to me, but now a Hell,
The filthy vest of vice I cast away,
Resolv'd its fearful game no more to play ;
Wine I renounc'd, and those licentious sports
In which to find amusement guilt imports,
Which prov'd the source of all my bitter woes,
The wreck of peace, a whirlpool to repose '
Then resolv'd I henceforth to seek in war
Those joys, those pleasures which the Soldier's are,
To snatch a prize from Victory, and win
A name and glory 'midst the battle's din !
And here stand I prepar'd my comrades brave,

To cross in search of danger yonder wave,
Evince my prowess in the battle field,
And rather die the warrior's death than yield !
So would I prove reviv'd the martial fire
Mourn'd as extinguish'd by my aged sire,
And seek to expiate the direful past, 380
By yielding for my country life at last !

So spake the Soldier, rising as he ceas'd,
His comrades' curiosity appeas'd,
And left the inn, these pond'ring as they went
The tale (to which they'd deep attention lent),
And all agreed these vices e'er combine,
The love of harlots and the love of wine ! 387

END OF CANTO I.

C A N T O II.

ARGUMENT.

DEPARTURE FROM ENGLAND—LIFE ON BOARD SHIP—CHARACTER DISCOVERED
—ST. HELENA—THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE—LANDING IN INDIA.

“ To the poor Exile all the world's his way.”

SHAKESPEAR.

CANTO II.

BEHOLD, the blushing mistress of the morn
Proclaims the son of Erebus' return,
The lark flies forth, enraptur'd by her voice,
The feather'd tribe awake and all rejoice :
The sons of Cain arise to till the field ;
Again their crooks the sons of Abel wield ;
And blithely forth the hardy reapers roam,
Chaunting the merry strains of " Harvest Home !"

Hark ! o'er the rising hills and lowly dell
The martial clarion's warlike accents swell,
Bid from his couch each slumb'ring soldier rise,
With haste equip himself in morning guise,
And when again its notes disturb the air
Unto the appointed rendezvous repair ;—

It is the morn of that eventful day
Which bears the warriors self-exil'd away !

Again the trump is heard, and now are seen
The stately ranks assembling on the green !
A strong detachment form a sep'rate line—
These as the heroes of the morning shine ; 20
Their costume, and the knapsacks which they bear,
Their destination to the coast declare.

The commandants review them and approve,
And now to warlike strains they onward move ;
With hearts oppress'd and many a tearful eye,
“ Huzza ! Huzza ! ” their gallant comrades cry !—
They pass the gates, march onward thro' the town,
While weeping maids their brows with cypress crown
Stern creditors evince sincere regret,
Tell the amount of each despair'd of debt ;
Those friends who've leisure and affection boast
Follow the fugitives unto the coast ;—
And others take a last, fond, ling'ring view,
Of those whom thought will wand'ring e'er pursue !

The scene expands, the open road appears,
Onward they press, for now the morning wears :

As each familiar scene they pass, "Farewell!"
They sigh, and who their various thoughts may tell?
Imagination, mem'ry, cling around
Such scenes, and ev'ry spot is hallow'd ground! 40
O'er hill and dale they pass with measur'd pace,
(How few their steps will e'er again retrace!)
Thro' villages, attracting rustic gaze;
'Midst pastures where the lowing oxen graze;
Until the harbour whence they sail appears,
Which now they hail with thrice-repeated cheers.
"The ship! the ship!" a hundred voices cry,
Now is the long expected moment nigh!
On the wide bank they ling'ring stand;—they cast
On those around a glance—it is their last—
The boats now bear them from their native shore,
And they their weeping friends behold no more!

Yon frigate see, capacious as an ark,
And, lo, on it our warriors now embark,
They climb her lofty sides, the deck attain,
And now dismiss'd may freely breathe again.
The deck with luggage, ropes, provisions, strew'd,
The bustling crew, vociferous and rude;
The clang of chains, the hoisting of each sail,

The struggling boatmen's clam'rous rival hail ; 60
The loud complaint in piercing accents told
Of captive geese and gruntern young and old ;
And the bold skipper's high stentorian roar,
(Whose notes 'bove all the others proudly soar,)
Confuse th' untutor'd eye, distract the ear
Of those who newly on the scene appear.
But yonder see a space is clear'd, and there
The weary troops with one consent repair
And simultaneously seek repose.
The hours are waning as they lightly doze ;
At length ere Night usurps the throne of Day,
Is heard the loud command, " The anchor weigh !"
" All hands a-hoy !" The sleeping soldiers wake,
Shake slumber off, and of the toil partake.
The massive fluke now slowly from the deep
They raise, the vessel rousing from her sleep—
Still labour they, yet higher it ascends—
Now to the breeze the flowing mainsail bends,
The helmsman takes the wheel her course to steer,
And on the frigate speeds in full career ! 80

A rough repast is now spread forth, to which
As much respect is paid as tho' 'twere rich ;

And, the meal finish'd, some retirè below,
 While others pace the orlop to and fro ;
 Till night advanc'd these also seek repose,
 And each unto his dormitory goes !

Speeds thro' the night the frigate on her way,—
 Now in the east is seen returning day !
 The troops are summon'd early, and appear
 The regulations of the ship to hear ;
 Divided into watches, they commence
 The tour of duty which progresses hence,—
 Four hours alternately each watch keep guard,
 The gallant ship which bears them on, their ward !

Thus pass the hours,—the Channel now they gain,
 Of dizziness and sickness some complain,
 While they whose brains and stomachs stand the test
 Join with the sailors to lampoon the rest ;
 Portsmouth is pass'd as night again comes on,
 But ere the morning from the view is gone, 100
 And, as auspicious breezes still attend,
 Soon is the cry heard o'er the ship, “ Land's End !”

What Briton's heart so passionless, so cold,
 What Briton's temper of so stern a mould,

As not to melt when Albion cries Adieu,
And when the soil of freedom fades from view ?
There stood the brave—bedimm'd with tears each eye,
Each wafting to his native land a sigh,
Breathing to heav'n a patriotic pray'r,
His fondest aspirations centred there !

Now on th' unbounded main, lo, they emerge,
And ride triumphant o'er the battling surge ;
Nought meets the vision, nought allures the eye,
Save one circumference of sea and sky !
Yet what a rich variety is there ;
How infinite the scene beyond compare !
The various aspects of the mighty deep,
When all its passions in its bosom sleep,
And when to rage arous'd, to fury urg'd,
Each billow roars by rude Argestes scourg'd, 120
Leviathan his oozy bed forsakes,
And ev'ry oceanic tribe awakes !—
The orbs of heav'n in bold relief appear,
Imagination bears us to each sphere ;
Amidst the host marshall'd on heav'n's champaign
We pass, and wander o'er the azure plain ;
We fly to meet the rising god of day,

Hail with our homage each forerunning ray,
And when appears Hyperion, in his train
Attend till he in state retires again ;
Then, as to his imperial couch he goes,
We sink with nature into calm repose !

Amid such scenes divided from their race,
Each character how plainly may we trace,
Each in this light resumes its faithful hue,
The INDIVIDUAL stands forth to view !
Behold THE CHRISTIAN ! in his hand he bears
The source of joy, a balm for all his cares !
It is the *word*, his hungry soul's repast,
His treasure now, his guide to heav'n at last ! 140
How calm his mood, his features how serene,
That peace which passeth knowledge here is seen,
While vice abash'd e'er quails before his gaze,
His life an off'ring of perpetual praise !
In silence he this beauteous scene beholds,
The wide expanse a mystery unfolds.
Awhile enthron'd upon the depths, Peace reigns,
And all is calm in Neptune's wide domains ;
Brief is her sway, rebellious billows rise,
Her pow'r to quell them Boreas defies,

Then meet the winds to combat with the waves,
And now the tempest in its fury raves ;
In vain the whirlwind seeks to vanquish, vain
The giant efforts of the mighty main,
Unconquerable each, awhile they cease
To war, and now is seen returning Peace ;—
Again she sways the sceptre, but anon
They strive again, yet ne'er the field is won !
In this he sees a type of man renew'd,
With sin, with passion, waging endless feud !

160

There sits THE IGNORANT, who ne'er was taught
In youth or years to exercise his thought !
Disease incurable by change of clime,
He knows no burden half so great as time :
Unknown, unfelt, the freedom of the soul,
His pleasures are the cards, the dice, the bowl ;
To these a slave he yields each livelong day,
In which with these he whiles the hours away !

Yonder THE IDLE see with half-clos'd eyes
And yawn prolong'd in vain essays to rise ;
There he devotion pays at Somnus' shrine,
Whom he esteems 'bove all the gods divine ;

There hecatombs of precious moments slays,
And sings loud pæans to his idol's praise;
And if awhile he cease the nasal strain,
He speedily renews the same again !

THE DISCONTENTED view ! with sullen air
He takes a portion of the gen'ral fare,
And while he eats, descants on flesh, fowl, fish,
Each dainty trifle and each lordly dish : 180
His dinner finish'd, chang'd his subject,—then
He pants to breathe his native air again :
Oft of malignity does he accuse
The Fates, bemoans his disappointed views,
And longs for other scenes in which to roam,
Or find in some fair Paradise a home !

There skulks THE DRUNKARD—selfish, senseless brute,
Whose claim to reason well might we dispute !
His haggard features bear the stamp of woe,
Yet with the fires of forc'd excitement glow ;
His sunken eye with ghastly lustre shines !
In dull torpidity he now reclines,
Anon his smould'ring passions fiercely blaze,
The furies scourge his soul, his senses craze ;

Exhausted soon to apathy he sinks,
And irreclaimable again he drinks !

With what a reckless air yon LIBERTINE
Scoffs at religion, mocks at things divine !
No god knows he but Chance, and mocks the word
Which to the world proclaims JEHOVAH Lord ! 200
He talks of Chesterfield, of Volney, Paine,
And longs to see them each appear again ;
Basks in the glitt'ring iceberg's borrow'd rays,
And freezing, boasts the comfort of the blaze :
At noon he wanders as in blackest night,
And madly points to darkness as the light !

But where's our hero ? Yonder see he stands,
And his demeanour our respect commands ;
On duty now, array'd in martial suit,
He guards the cabin,—vigilant and mute,
The deck with measur'd step and dauntless eye
He paces, scanning those who hover nigh.
Of his profession proud, he loves to wield
The sword, and trains in leisure for the field,
Impatient oft to reach those distant shores
O'er which the tide of battle furious pours,

In th' impetuous stream his soul to lave,
To breast the surge and buffet with the wave !

But lo, Helena proudly lifts her head
And rises from her Atlantean bed ; 220
Each warrior bows at Delia's* behest,
She bears NAPOLEON's ashes in her breast !
NAPOLEON, who prov'd his sword a claim
To empire, conquest, wealth, eternal fame !
NAPOLEON, the Jupiter who hurl'd
War's thunderbolts o'er an astonish'd world !
NAPOLEON, of origin obscure,
Whose name will shine while earth and heav'n endure !

Behold, around the stormy Cape they sail,
Sped swiftly onward by the boist'rous gale ;
Now plunging 'midst the billows, o'er them now
Vaulting as they their crests submissive bow :
Again these foam with rage, the course impede,
Yet lightly onward bounds the ocean steed !

* Delia, or Diana, in allusion to a mountain in the island of St Helena, termed " Diana's Peak."

Still onward speeds the frigate, and behold,
 At length their outline India's shores unfold '
 How grateful is once more the sight of land ;
 How long we, as we view, thereon to stand '
 The mind recalls as on these scenes we gaze
 The fireside tales of each one's earlier days ;
 E'en tho' the view be wild and frowning, we
 A thousand beauties in its features see ;
 Tho' barren, fruits depend from many a tree ;
 We hail with rapture the Elysian fields,
 And taste the ecstasy ambrosia yields '—
 So now our troops the sight with rapture hail,
 And while the rushing breeze expands their sail
 Prepare to disembark, anticipate
 A thousand joys which their arrival wait,
 The blush of houris, nectar, fragrant groves,
 And all those pleasures which the soldier loves '

240

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Lo, now appears in view a brig attach'd
 To yonder pilot ship and thence dispatch'd '
 Th' enamour'd winds embrace her yielding sails,
 She nears the frigate, her lieutenant hails ;
 The pilot steps on board, receives command,
 And bids them hope ere many days to land.

Behold, canoes approach them from the coast,
Whose crews seem part of the infernal host,
Pilots from Pandemonium, Pluto's gift ! 260
Their clam'rous voices now on high they lift,
Borne like the shouts of demons on the breeze ;
They reach the ship, and swarm around like bees,
With many a broad grimace display their store,—
Bananas, yams, and cocoa-nuts galore :
So wondrous civil too, for all they bring
They but desire our profiles of the king !

And now as close the shades of ev'ning round
Is heard the long anticipated sound ;
The loud command, " Let go the anchor ! " o'er
The ship resounds, is echoed from the shore !
'Tis done, and now the massive cables rein
The spirit of the courser of the main :
Anon the troops retire, and once more sleep
Secure upon the bosom of the deep ;
Again they weigh, their rapid course pursue,
And hail ere long Calcutta in the view !

The hour is come ! they disembark, they stand
Upon the coast of their adopted land ;

Marshall'd in ranks cross now th' adjacent plain, 280
And now the Fort their destination gain ;
While ev'ry thing that meets the eye is fraught
With interest and novelty, nor aught
Pass'd unobserv'd by them which may excite
Amazement, admiration, or delight ;
For in this land they 've many years to spend,
And some will here their earthly journey end !

Behold yon frowning and repulsive mass !
Its gates unfold, they now its bastions pass ;
On they proceed, delighted reach at length
The citadel ! And now their wasted strength
Intending to recruit ere they commence
The journey to their destin'd province hence,
They halt ! Here friends with joy they recognize,
Comrades erewhile whose fellowship they prize ;
With warm delight the union is renew'd,
And thus their future path with garlands strew'd ;
For all look forward to an active life
As one with joys replete with pleasures rife ! 299

C A N T O III.

ARGUMENT.

FORT WILLIAM—A FRIEND—DEPARTURE FOR THE UPPER PROVINCES—A TALE
—AMBITION ASTRAY—MARCH THROUGH THE JUNGLES, ETC —THE REGI-
MENT.

“ Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine ;
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all save the spirit of man is divine ?”

CANTO III.

LET none adopt a soldier's life who e'er
Would not to cope with stern privations dare !
Steep is the mount up which to climb is fame ;
And who the laurels of renown would claim,
Not alone danger must confront, and wield
The sword in vig'rous contest on the field
Of war ; but with Fatigue, with Heat, Cold, Want,
Ally himself, nor aught his soul may daunt !
'Tis this that constitutes THE SOLDIER, this
The spirit which alone makes warfare bliss !

The citadel our hero now survey'd,
And frequent visits to its armoury paid,
Was, tho' amaz'd, delighted to behold
Its vast display of weapons manifold,

Huge pyramids of shot astonish'd view'd,
 And acres with artill'ry thickly strew'd '
 Oft mounted he the battlements, his eye
 Tracing the stream which rolls serenely by,
 Noting the situation of the Fort,
 Its bold command of the adjacent port, 20
 Its pow'rs aggressive, means of long defence,
 And its resources varied and immense :
 "How mighty," would he cry, "how great the art
 Whose instruments are here but seen in part !"

Kind Jupiter resolv'd he now would send
 A source of int'rest in a much lov'd friend.
 One ev'ning, while yet quarter'd in the Fort,
 A ship was seen approaching to the port,
 (Its pennants gaily waving in the air,)
 And, as it nearer drew, observ'd to bear
 Troops recogniz'd as from the parent land,
 A reinforcement to our gallant band. }
 The harbour gain'd, soon on the neighb'ring stand,
 Appear the new detachment, whom to meet
 All now haste forth and with loud welcomes greet.
 With wonder and with melancholy joy
 Our hero one whom he had known a boy,

An early playmate saw ! He too had prov'd
In riper years that he sincerely lov'd
And well esteem'd him, but had never known 40
The events which led and left him here alone.
Perplex'd to own these, of his errors vile
Asham'd, he linger'd unresolv'd awhile,
Then to his friend disclos'd himself ! How sweet
It is an old companion thus to meet ;
And oh, how warmly did these now embrace,
How fondly each long treasur'd feature trace !

And now is heard the summons to prepare
The garrison to leave, and to repair
To their appointed corps ! without delay,
Pregnant with hope, they joyously obey.
All are alert, endeavoring to provide
Against whate'er may on the march betide,
And laying by for future use a store
Of goods they elsewhere scarce might e'er procure.
Whole herds of buffaloes (the baggage train)
And elephants assemble on the plain,
A camp is form'd, and soon arrives the day !
At whose appearance, lo, they march away !

First in the van is seen the martial band
 Whence notes melodious on the air expand ;
 The heavily accoutred ranks appear
 Next in succession ; while the distant rear
 A num'rous elephantine retinue
 (Gigantic tent-bearers) presents to view.
 Onward with vig'rous steps the troops proceed,
 Till morn advanc'd they rest and shelter need ;
 These find they in a neighbouring serai,
 And both throughout the ardent day enjoy.

60

" Dear Comrade," cried our hero to his friend
 As they at eve convers'd, " I pray thee lend
 A moment to retrace thy past career,
 And point the wond'rous path which led thee to me here."

" Alas !" cried he, " I sorely now repent
 That hither my untoward course I bent !
 When last I saw you, destin'd for the bar,
 I dreamt not I should e'er serve hardy war ;
 Nor thirsted I to conquer daring foes,
 But rather on the ~~weck~~ sack to repose,
 While Blackstone levied ev'ry idle hour,
 I proudly rear'd on high ambition's tow'r !"

80

" And how didst thou e'er cross the stream so wide
Which the Woolsack and Sentry-box divide ?"

" Oft have you heard me speak with deep concern,
Anticipate the long delay'd return
Of my paternal uncle. He at last
His foot on British soil, returning, cast :
We met, embraced. I heard with a delight
Before unknown tales he would oft recite
Of foreign lands, an epicurean feast
To me, the gorgeous splendors of the East.
I studied less, sage Blackstone dull became,
Coke fail'd to nourish the expiring flame ;
While fuel heap'd incessantly soon rais'd
That newly kindled till it fiercely blaz'd :—
' Shall I,' exclaim'd I, ' make the world mine own,
Its palaces, its vineyards, freely roam,
Pluck priceless diamonds from the greedy mine,
And round my brow the wreath of fame entwine —
Or shall I year by year obscurely toil, 100
Unseen, unknown, beyond my native soil,
Unsped my arrows tho' my bow be bent,
The slave of Fortune, victim of Content ?"

" Excited by these visions of the brain,
 Then resolv'd I to cross the stormy main,
 To traverse Ind, its wond'rous pomp behold,
 Harems explore and streams whose sands are gold.
 Soon to my friends my projects I disclos'd,
 Who deem'd me mad, and my designs oppos'd ;
 But quickly leap'd the barriers they rear'd
 I from the scene immediate disappear'd !
 Then threw I down the pen and grasp'd the sword,
 For war methought would now the means afford
 All else denied to prosecute my views,
 And glory o'er my future path diffuse.
 Fool that I was ! now has the bubble burst,
 Assuag'd in bitter streams my raging thirst,
 To taste those phantom viands vain I crave,
 The ling'ring captive of a living grave !"

" Awhile, my friend, the spark of hope preserve, 120
 Britannia is the mistress whom you serve !
 This badge, her gift to thee, proclaims e'en now
 That her approval doth thine acts endow ;—
 Her confidence in thee these weapons prove,
 'Tis thine to win the bright reward of love !
 From Disappointment's listless couch arise,

Exertion will achieve a mighty prize,
And perseverance rob thy toil of pain,
Till thou the summit of ambition gain !”
Thus spake our hero, seeking to impart
A martial fervour to his comrade’s heart ;
For now with sorrow he perceiv’d that ne’er
The genuine flame had yet been kindled there,
And fear’d his soul in apathy would freeze,
A lethargy anon his spirit seize !

’Tis night ! and all is stillness, save when heard
The startling note of some nocturnal bird,
Or when some wand’ring jackall’s hideous bay
Invites the troop to share his loathsome prey ;
The watchful sentinels in silence keep
The safety of their comrades while they sleep !
Unheeded pass the hours successive on
Till the reveille tells th’ approach of dawn,
Bids all the martial character assume,
And now prepare their journey to resume ;
They rise, and soon accoutred, form their ranks,
They march, and bend their path to Gunga’s banks !

140

Lo ! in the orient smiling Sol ascends,

And to the scene his genial presence lends ;
 Brightly his rays upon the waters gleam
 As now our troops approach the sacred stream :
 Impatient crews there line the sandy shore,
 Whose clumsy dinghies wait to bear them o'er.
 Now enter they, the stream is rapid, wide,
 At length with joy they gain the other side ;
 And now they halt, for here they pass the day !
 The boats again dispatch'd, launch from the quay
 And thence recross the baggage to convey. }
 Their burdens, lo, the pond'rous tribe resign,
 And to the waters now themselves consign ; 160
 The buff'loes follow, and at once complete
 A scene with novelty and mirth replete.
 The giant leaders of the motley train
 Delight to reach the element again,
 Sport with the stream and with the current strive,
 Now suddenly beneath its surface dive,
 Pour from their trunks a crystal stream on high,
 And with each other's gambols rudely vie ;
 While th' inferior tribe afar appear,
 With grave solemnity bring up the rear
 As when some artful prince would gain a throne

And make a kingdom's revenues his own,
He scatters presents with a lib'ral hand,
And smiles on all who in his presence stand ;
But, gain'd his object, grasps the iron rod,
Claims homage, deals forth vengeance, as a god :
So Phœbus rising, smil'd on all around,
But now a tyrant merciless is found,
O'er all establishing despotic reign,
And bearing death and sickness in his train !

180

At length the tents arrive, and now the view
Assumes an aspect picturesque and new !
Lo, in a moment, at the giv'n command,
A city rises from the desert strand :
Its architects are for their toil repaid,
Each habitation lends a grateful shade ;
Its snow-white walls reflect the dazzling beam,
Itself reflected in the crystal stream.
Whose course we in the bright perspective trace ;
E'en tho' dame Nature wears a languid face,
Her features charm ; fain I awhile would rove
Amidst the balmy shades of yonder grove,
But Sol forbids ; so we will seek our tent,
He may, if we repose awhile, relent.

The Zephyrs fold their wings ; ~~their~~ coursers curb
The Winds ; no gentle gales the air disturb !
Silence, Night's solemn sister,* ~~weds~~ the day,
And o'er the scene assumes imperial sway ;
Nor aught disturbs the wearied soldier's dream
Save when is heard the rav'nous vulture's scream ; 200
Or when the prowling kite beholds his prey,
And bears it with a screech of joy away ;
Or some vociferous toad assails the ear,
Or buzzing insects ventures to draw near :
We also now obey the voice of sleep,
And soon are lost to all in slumbers deep.

Lo, gentle Eve at length with graceful mien,
In stately robe array'd, bends o'er the scene ;
She comes to drive the tyrant from his throne,
And on its ruins to erect her own !
Behold, e'en now the despot's sway expires,
Before her presence Sol in pomp retires,
The Zephyrs wake and follow in his train ;
His glories, scatter'd o'er the azure plain,
The dark, the fleecy cloud, adorn with hues
Of splendor, and magnificence diffuse.

Young.

Here glorious purple robes the heav'ns ; there glows
 The sky with all the beauty of the rose ;
 Yonder a sea of emerald expands
 Illimitable ; here we wond'rous lands,
 Lakes, continents, peninsulas may trace,
 In blue depicted with a matchless grace !
 All now come forth to hail a scene so fair,
 The gentle influence of eve to share,
 Inhale luxuriously the balmy air ;
 While a delicious calm steals o'er the mind,
 The soul its passions in reflection bind,
 And on the wings of faith the spirit flies
 To brighter scenes beyond th' emblazon'd skies !

220

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Again 'tis night ! the camp in silence lies
 Until the hour draws nigh which bids them rise :
 The tent-man's mallet first the stillness breaks,
 As from each tent he strikes the trusty stakes ;
 The clamour wakes the slumb'ring steeds, and they
 In turn the morn proclaim with am'rous neigh ;
 The elephant responds with piercing screech
 Reverberated from the rocky beach ;
 A gentle gray illumines the eastern sky,
 And now reveille tells that day is nigh :

The troops arise, themselves in haste array, 240
 Pack up their tents, assemble, march away !
 Thus pass they num'rous days ; still journeying through
 Scenes interesting, various, ever new :—
 Here their road leads thro' an extensive town,
 Of ancient origin and wide renown ;
 Anon 'midst wild and desert scenes they toil,
 Now o'er a rocky, now a sandy soil !

Lo, 'tis the Sabbath,—day of peace and rest !—
 Our trav'lers duly honour Heav'n's behest.
 'Midst a dense jungle stands the camp ; the scene
 At once appears romantic and serene.
 Far as the eye extends, a woody maze
 Impenetrable, pathless, meets its gaze :
 Here we behold a deep ravine, ~~o~~ spread
 By lofty forests, the perpetual bed
 Of darkness unreliev'd by noon-day glare,
 'Midst which the savage tiger finds a lair,
 Weak tribes seek refuge from their mightier foes,
 And bats and night-jars undisturb'd repose.
 The west presents to our delighted view 260
 A range of hills crown'd by th' ~~eth~~ etherial blue,
 The prospect bounding. Lo, the lofty zone

On which bright Phœbus' rays themselves enthroned,
Towards the south extends, embraces there
Th' horizon, softly blending with the air,
Till lost to view : while in the distant east
The mind may rhapsodize, the eye may feast
O'er a wide plain, whence rise the graceful palm
'Midst od'rous grasses which the air embalm,
And where the sacred banian's spreading shade
Invites to rest the wand'rer o'er the glade.

But hark ! the bugle's thrilling note resounds
Thro' the clear welkin ; the remotest bounds
Of the wide scene receive, yon lofty chain
Reverberates, the clear the warlike strain.
Its mandate, lo, our warriors now obey,
Form a parade, and marching bend their way
Towards a distant tent, th' appointed place
Of worship and of pray'r for mercy, grace.
The liturgy is read, and shortly they
To their respective tents return : the day
In reading some, and some in sleep, pass o'er,
Till blushing Eve returns to them once more ;
The mellow shades of twilight veil the sky,
And Luna beams with mildness from on high !

Now issues the shahmour from its retreat,
Pours o'er the beauteous scene its accents sweet,
Its song enchanting on the zephyr's wing;
Thro' the recesses of the forest ring
The horned owl's wild misanthropic tones
Of mirthless laughter; while the woodbul's moans,
And cries feline, the night-jar's mournful chirp,
Conspire the throne of silence to usurp.

Anon her sway resumes the ebon queen,
Veils with a shade obscure the sylvan scene,
Calls the blood-thirsty tiger from his lair,
The cruel leopard and the savage bear;
Bids the fierce panther who at pity mocks,
The wolf rapacious, the hyæna, fox,
And rav'nous jackall, her auspicious sway
Confess, do homage and pursue their prey.
Each tribe obey, their voices lift on high,
And now the camp approaching hover nigh,
By scent of man and beast, their game, allur'd;
But as a feeble fortress circummur'd
By walls impregnable, behold it stands,
A blazing zone girt round it, nor these bands
Predatious dare the flaming bastion storm;

And while some flee with cries of loud alarm,
We others view less timid, who afar
Stand gazing and denouncing endless war !

Again the morn appears : they early rise,
Pursue the road which straight before them lies,
The march diurnally henceforth pursue,
Until th' appointed province greets their view !
The cantonment behold on yonder plain,
And our detachment, lo, its precincts gain !
Around them flock the troops, congratulate
On their arrival, and upon them wait
In friendly guidance, till the quarters gain'd 320
They halt ! Rest and refreshment now obtain'd,
Of their past toils and dangers they converse ;
Their personal adventures some rehearse,
Others anticipate their coming toils,
And some few mix in Bacchanalian broils !

Our hero and his disconcerted friend
Among the first are found ; and as we lend
Attention to their converse we perceive
That which inspires the one does e'en the other grieve !

Some feature which can never fail to please,
While soldiers must Fatigue and Hardship claim
As friends, their guidance 'tis which leads to fame !

“ As for the scene before us, (tis replete
With interest ! Here daily we may greet
A thousand brother warriors, daily here
In martial exercise our spirits cheer,
Observe the manners, customs, of the East, 360
And on an oriental banquet feast ;
As lions couchant here the call await
Which bids us glory win, renown create !

“ The distant future (tho' diseas'd, thy sight
Imparts to it a gloomy hue,) is bright
In splendor by the sun of hope^{*} diffus'd !
Let not its light in vain be shed, refus'd
Admittance to thy breast, 'twill sink in gloom,
And darkness unreliev'd will be thy doom !” 369

C A N T O IV.

ARGUMENT.

EVERY-DAY LIFE IN INDIA—PARADES AND EXERCISES—GUARD-MOUNTING—THE
SEASONS—EVENING AMUSEMENTS—PROMOTION—DISCONTENT ENGENDERS
RECKLESSNESS—MILITARY FLOGGING—AN APPEAL—INTEMPERANCE—
DISEASE—WAR.

“ Martial pomp each day renewing,
Drilling, parading, grand reviewing,
Batt'ries firing, columns wheeling,
Clouds of smoke the sun concealing !”

CANTO IV.

As when some youthful Phocion lifts his eyes,
And first Minerva's glorious temple spies,
His path he to the mighty structure bends,
And daily at its portal studious tends ;
Till when, admittance gain'd, among the band
Who e'er devoutly in its court-yard stand,
He takes a place, of toil assumes a share ;
By slow degrees initiated there, '
Learns to decipher each mysterious sign,
And understand each oracle divine,
And when in these well skill'd exalted high'r,
A perfect priest lights up the sacrificial fire ;

So now by Fate (ambition too his guide,) }
To the brave sons of valiant Mars allied, }
The art Bellonic, ev'ry warrior's pride, }
Becomes our hero's task, assumes a sway }

O'er all his pow'rs, claims tribute of each day.
Pass'd through an element'ry course of drill,
And taught to wield his arms with martial skill,
With grace each evolution to perform,
Firm to achieve amid the battle storm,
And ev'ry point of discipline to know,
He now the strong battalion joins ; and lo,
In yonder squadron marching, enfilade
Among the troops assembling on parade,
Is seen. Behold, *in column* now these stand
Prepar'd t' obey, whate'er the stern command ;
While from the force not e'en a breath escapes,
No muscle stirs, no languid soldier gapes,
A stillness reigns of vig'rous act the germ,
As adamantine ramparts stand they firm !

20

Lo, the command is giv'n, " WHEEL INTO LINE !"
How gracefully the squadrons now combine ;
In well kept order each compactly bound,
As though a solid mass, they circle round :
Each outward file with steady pace defines
The arc which to the boundary inclines ;
To these progressively the rest conform,
With step, while shorter, firm and uniform ;

And while the inner flank as pivot serves,
A perfect front unbroken each preserves 40
Till in one stately rank uniting, they
Halt and await the next command t' obey.

“ *Line will advance !* ” is now the edict heard :
Each file locks up more closely at the word ;
And at the order “ March ! ” with step sedate
And equal cadence, in direction straight
As though the mathematic rule their guide,
On to the front advance in stately pride,
Unwavering ! How accurate each pace,
Each movement how precise, how blent with grace,
While in the midst their glitt’ring banners wave,
And to the breeze disclose the actions of the brave !

Behold, again dividing, at command,
In *Echelon* the warlike squadrons stand ;
Advancing still, now *form* the bristling *Square*,
And to resist th’ impetuous horse prepare !
For when battalions o’er th’ ensanguin’d plain,
By furious Battle claimed as his domain,
Are scatter’d wide, with speed the mounted foe
Rush on them, kill, destroy with every blow, 60

And trample to the earth if unprepar'd :—
 But vainly they the vengeful arm have bar'd,
 If their advances firmly thus be met,
 Repell'd on each side by the gleaming bayonet !

And now behold the outer ranks who kneel
 Arise, the whole position changing, *wheel*,
 And firmly COLUMN SUBDIVIS'NAL form :
 The centre halts ; extending as an arm
 Each wing its inner flanks we see combine,
 And halting, now they once more stand in stately LINE !

Lo, they again advance, and now the word,
 “ *Prepare to charge* ” o'er the wide scenc is heard.
 As when the eagle from his mountain lair
 An en'my spies, he issues on mid air,
 Unfolds his pinions, lays his talons bare,
 With one fell swoop then rushes on his foe, .
 And bears his mangled carcass soon below ;—
 Or when display'd his courage and his might,
 Safety permits to seek in rapid flight ;—
 So the command, “ CHARGE ! ” giv'n, behold these raise 80
 Their weapons, in whose gleaming vict'ries blaze,
 With firm and rapid step advance t' repel

Th' imagined enemy, their forces quell ;
 Transfix the craven as he panting flies,
 Achieve the conqu'rors' well contested prize,
 While many a valiant foeman nobly dies ;
 And who escape th' annihilating sword
 Mourn fame, dominion lost, to be no more restor'd !

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The foe by fancy marshall'd thus dispers'd,
 The mighty deeds of future days rehears'd,
 Lo, our brave squadrons from the field RETIRE,
 By these achievements fann'd their native fire,
 And thirsting in the carnage-springing stream
 Those blades to tarnish which reflect now Sol's bright beam.

But see ! the clarion's shrill and lofty note
 Arrests each in its retrogressive route ;
 From each a party now detach, and while
 Retiring these resume their march, enfile,
 And to the rendezvous appointed bend
 Their course, while drum and fife their steps attend. 100
 Assembled and inspected as they stand,
 The order, " To your guards ! " giv'n in command,
 Again they march. Hence we their sev'ral posts
 May trace, (defences 'gainst invading hosts,)

Of which, behold, they now assume the charge.
The quarter-guard, lo, those relieve most large .
In number. To the front advancing slow
They halt in line with those form'd up below,
(The guard of yesterday,) and ope their ranks.
The drums and fifes now station'd on the flanks,
Loud salutation each the other gives
With martial pomp ; the orders then receives
The new commander ; sentinels are chang'd ;
The old guard march away ; and all's arrang'd.

Thus train'd to execute with perfect art
Herculean deeds of valiance, our cohort
Britannia's call her cause to vindicate
With fervour and bold confidence await.
Thus daily exercis'd in deeds of might,
Acquire they prowess for the death-fraught fight,
And raise the barrier of undaunted zeal
Against the future foeman's shot and steel !

120

Meanwhile the rest (save they who've Extra Drill,
A medicine for those whose conduct's ill,)
Their barracks gain'd, disperse ; forthwith appeal
To the purveyor for their morning meal ;

And this with zeal discuss'd, amusement seek ;
Some in a shady spot— and many a freak
By these perform'd we witness ;—cricket, ball,
Bowls, ninepins, quoits, attract, and others call
With urgent voice to pass the dreary time !
(Dreary indeed in this oppressive clime !)—
The studious to the library depart,
Get all the titles of new works by heart,
While Bacchus' sons seek out the toddy tree ;—
“ How merrily we live that soldiers be !”
But now Sol's scorching beam bids all retreat
To shelter from its vitrifying heat :
Some sleep the morn inactively away,
And some engage in soul-absorbing play,
Dice, cards, and chess the games ; while others read, 140
And one Pegasus mounting spurs with speed
Aloft, e'en tho' the body weighs him down
To earth, and Pain would gentle Fancy drown
In its dark, rapid stream ! All thus employ'd
Count time a tenement unfurnish'd, void
Of ornament, which Melancholy's sprite
Inhabits, causing a perpetual night !

The drum is heard as strikes the ghurrie one ;

At the loud signal dinner is begun,
But weak the appetite, the repast slight,
For now the reeking frame in piteous plight,
From ev'ry pore perspiring, ne'er requires
With hardy meats to feed th' internal fires.
The hours succeeding pass as those before,
Till that which does to Eve the throne restore,
Tempers the glowing atmosphere, and calms
The suffocating breeze, with fragrant balms
Loading the zephyr's wing ! And now arise
The sleepy, who complain time swiftly flies ;
The studious from his cot, which serves as bed
And bedstead, chair and stool, from study led
By duty, rising now, his chest unlocks,
Which serves as wardrobe, library, desk and box,
Brings forth his garments and himself attires ;
The gamblers cease their play, the Muse retires
From the green bow'rs of Helicon to earth ;
Gives, in her downward flight miscarrying, birth
To children embryotic ; and lo, all
Fall in accoutred at the bugle's call !
Till 'neath th' horizon Phoebus hides his face,
On yon campaign we the battalion trace
At exercise as in the morn. Dismiss'd

When Luna's ray the brow of heav'n hath kiss'd,
They pass the ev'ning merrily away
In social parties form'd. The comic lay
Is heard from one proceeding ; seated there
A crowd of anxious listeners appear
Around one gather'd, who recites a tale ;—
Whilst here a knot of politicians rail
At state abuses, heard of from afar, 180
And some discuss the benefits of war,
Others, whose voices sound like clatt'ring gongs,
Expatiate upon the soldier's wrongs ;
Until tattoo the harmony disturbs,
And all the eloquence of party curbs,
Bids each submit to Night's imperious sway
And court that sleep which fits for labours of the day.

Thus passes time—each day like that before
Unvarying, save when the waters pour
In their appointed season on the earth ;
Then give the gloaming clouds to ennui birth,
Our warriors cease to exercise the sword
On open field, until again restor'd
The lucid sky, and Phœbus dries the tears
Which fell from heav'n, and Ecstasy appears

In his bright smile ! They then again resume
 Their practice, while amusements time consume.

Meanwhile unblemish'd on the rolls his name,
 The meed of merit his distinguish'd aim,
 Behold a higher rank our hero gains,
 Nor yet the star of his successes wanes ;
 Another step is added to the first,
 Alleviating fierce ambition's thirst,
 Hope feeding, on Bellona's bosom nurs'd,
 Refreshing his bold spirit with good cheer,
 Encouraging thus still to persevere !

200

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Not thus his former comrade and his friend
 Does Fortune by Discretion bidden tend :
 Alas ! with life disgusted in life's noon,
 Gloomy at first, depriv'd and reckless soon,
 No path he follow'd save where caprice led,
 Whence reason, conscience, honour, all had fled ;
 The faithless guide betrays him to the foe,
 He stands a pris'ner in the camp of woe.

Behold you bristling square of warriors ; see
 One 'midst them as a captive bound—'tis he !

With sullen air he hears his crime proclaim'd,
A drunkard stands convicted and asham'd ;
Hears Justice unrelenting and severe
Pronounce his doom ; the executioners near 220
Beholds in waiting with the furrowing lash,
And shudd'ring e'en anticipates each agonizing gash !

“ Stand forth !” cries Justice, he obeys ; again,
“ Strip !” she exclaims,—’tis done, resistance vain !
To yon triangle now conducted, bound
To its embrace by those who stand around,
His lifted arm behold the flag’lant bends,
And at a sign the knotted scourge descends.
No shriek escapes the crim’nal, not a word
E’en tho’ his heart seems bursting, as the cord
Again and yet again uplifted falls !
His gutter’d flesh our sick’ning sight appals ;
The crimson tide, its channels op’d, escapes,
With many a wound the thong-shear’d body gapes :
Some from the scene revolting seek the rear,
And many an eye exudes soft Pity’s tear,
As ’neath the lash the quiv’ring victim sinks,
The chain corrodes which life unto the body links !

O ye, whose voices rule Britannia's fate,
Ye senators, ye pillars of the state, 240
Whose words are statutes, and whose deeds are fame,
Say, will ye thus disgrace the warrior's name ?
While sits Britannia mistress of the world,
Shall thus her sons from Reason's throne be hurl'd ?
Shall man, the child of heav'n, be as the brute,
Or sophistry the vicio of God confute ?
Go, learn of Prussia how to legislate
For armies ; learn that moral force is great !
Seek to convince the heart and not the sense,
Which tortur'd, drives repentance ever thence.
That noble pride which fills the soldier's breast
The lash annihilating droops its crest,
While honour gives to profligacy place
And malice e'en distorts bland patriotism's face !

Yet not less culpable he who resigns
Discretion, if the flame he tempts calcines ;
Nor blameless he who spurns restraint and flies
To barb'rous hordes who sacrifice their prize,
Or' neath the eddying whirlpool plunging deep 260
Returns not, nor survives the fatal leap ;
Obedience is the path of Safety, thence

Diverging, danger is the consequence ;
But follow'd, it to honour leads, exalts,
From observation hides a thousand faults ;
By orbs of splendor unsurpass'd, illum'd,
By ever-constant gales of odorous breath perfum'd.

What demon then the warrior leads astray,
What fiend allures from this delightful way ?
INTEMPERANCE, chiefest of the sons of Hell,
Whose presence is the wizard's midnight spell ;
Whose converse, reason's blight ; whose smile is death ;
Devouring pestilence ! whose sulph'rous breath ;
Whose mantle hides the surpent's writhing form ;
The giant's whose annihilating arm !
Disguising these, his brow with flow'rs he decks,
Presents himself before the trav'ler, becks,
Points out Elysian fields and crystal streams,
Arbours whose foliage shade the noon-day beams,
And proffers guidance to these scenes of bliss,
And vows to make them e'en for ever his !
Entices he his victim thus astray ;
And when from Virtue's path far far away,
The verdant plain a flinty desert proves,
Nor finds he e'er its fancy-pictur'd groves ;

Its waters fade to air at his approach,
He smarts beneath the sting of self-reproach,
Yet trusts the traitor still, who vows to lead
Him to the flowing streams and flow'ry mead,
And friendship swearing to his direst foe,
Receives, expires beneath, his life-destroying blow.

O warriors ! sons of glory ! heirs of fame !
Let not the foe thus triumph in your shame !
No longer let him proudly vaunt his skill,
In leading you astray whene'er he will ;
But rise with one consent, where'er he's found,
Annihilate, destroy,—his future wand'rings bound.

Now summer reappears, and lo, the earth
Rejoicing gives to num'rous children birth :
Flora appears with all her glorious train,
Salutes her spouse, with him resumes her reign. 300
Are these alone? Oh, no ! see pale Disease
Comes tott'ring on behind with trembling knees,
And haggard Melancholy in the rear
Does with her child, Insanity, appear ;
While Death brings up the train of ghastly woes,
Which at the voice of summer also rose !

The host dispersing, each now goes his way,
Eager to make the human tribe his prey :—
There rav'nous Cholera goes with hasty strides,
And Science' aim to block his path derides ;
Life at his presence prostrate falls or flies ;
Charg'd with destruction from his nostrils rise
Mephitic vapours, which pollute the air,
And terror, pain, to all around him bear ;
Deep sighs, loud groanings, thro' the welkin ring,
Hail him precursor of the grisly king.

How many a tender flow'r doth Fever crush
As yonder wand'ring, with health-mocking blush
Tinging his hollow cheek, and om'nous frown,
His cruel footsteps heav'ly tread them down. 320
Snapped from their stems, they spring no more, but lie,
Their fragrance sweet exhaling, fade and die.

E'en Nature seems at enmity with man,
He helpless lies 'neath a remorseless ban.
A countless host of petty ills conspire
To damp with pain and grief the vital fire,
Oppress the heart, obstruct the brilliant ray
Of cheerfulness, and steal content away.

To these, yea, e'en to all the tribe a prey
Defenceless, cursing each returning day
Which but renews the lease of breath despis'd,
And life held valueless, (none life can prize
While barren of delight, with weeds and thorns
And brambles only teeming, naught adorns
Its once productive soil,) our troops await
Winter's desir'd return ; but mourn the fate
Of many a warrior of illustrious name,
And many a hero lost to future fame,
In th' irremediable clutch of death,
Ere these their keen and deadly weapons sheath 340
At his approach, before his presence fly,
And joyous Health once more to them draws nigh.

At length the season's changes kind restore
Man's drooping frame, and o'er his spirit pour
A fragrant and invigorating balm !
WINTER, of aspect mild, and temper calm,
Whom all the majesty of monarchs grace,
Draws nigh ! Upon his lofty brow we trace,
In blazing characters of fire display'd,
The soldier's glory, terror of the maid,
" WAR !" —Glorious vision to the gallant knight,

Who meets with transport only in the fight,
 And to the humble followers in his train,
 Who pant for conflict and the battle-plain:
 For e'en as fuel to the latent fire,
 The minstrel's hand unto the silent lyre,
 So to the soldier is that magic word,
 When by the vision seen, or by the hearing heard !

Excitement universal reigns ;—the call
 “To arms !” anticipated hourly, all 360
 Prepare their trusty weapons for the strife ;
 On these depending victory and life,
 The sword receives a finer edge ; the pike
 And lance a point which may unerring strike
 Death to the foeman's heart ; the musket stands
 Examination, proof. Prudence commands
 Precaution, and the conqu'ror not alone
 Indomitable courage calls his own,
 But with firm confidence the weapon wields,
 Which to no foe save grisly Death he yields !

As round the spheres his coursers wing their way,
 His missives smiling couriers display,
 Which banish cruel Night, recal the Day, }

Bright Phœbus' glorious presence earth illumes,
His sway again, and yet again resumes ;
Our warriors exercise their skill in arms,
Proclaim Bellona queen of thousand charms,
The path prescrib'd the valiant sons of Mars,
In which they shine a galaxy of stars,
Pursuing e'er, the atmosphere their rays 380
Illuming with a genial, glorious blaze !

O glorious War, which nurtures manly pride,
And makes man careless of whate'er betide
In life's e'er varying scene, if but his hand
May wield successfully thy magic wand,
The sword on which bright Vict'ry sits enthron'd !
For tho' by earth his valiant name disown'd,
The son of Mars may claim its wide domain,
And o'er an universal kingdom reign,
And honour, fame eternal, thus be gain'd,
If this in firm possession be retain'd ! 391

C A N T O V.

ARGUMENT.

BHURTPORE—ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH ARMY—THE SIEGE COMMENCED—
PREPARATIONS FOR THE STORMING—THE DESERTER—THE STORM—THE
SURRENDER OF THE CITADEL—THE EXECUTION—VICTORY. .

“ As Autumn’s dark storms pour from two echoing hills, towards each other approach the heroes. As two dark streams from high rocks meet and mix, and roar on the plain ; loud, rough, and dark. in battle, meet Lochlin and Inisfail. Chief mixed his strokes with chief, and man with man. Steel clanging sounded on steel. Helmets are cleft on high ; blood bursts and smokes around As the troubled noise of the ocean, when roll the waves on high ; as the last peal of the thunder of heaven, such is the noise of battle.”

OSSIAN.

CANTO V.

ARISE, my Muse ! from Helicon's pure stream
Fresh draughts inspire, renew thy glorious theme ;
Thy wings expand,—fly to the battle field,
(Appollo thee from ev'ry danger shield !)
The fam'd Bhurtpore ! Delineate the view
Thy vision meets, with pencil graphic, true ;
The conflict witness, and describe the fight,
Shed glory round the scene, and everlasting light !

Near the fam'd Palmyra of India* lies
The city claim'd as fair Britannia's prize ;
Of wide extent, and fortified around
By walls of lofty height, which also, bound
By a broad aqueous belt, by bastions flank'd,
Upon which huge artillery are rank'd,

* Agra.

Frown on th' invading foe, it stands erect !
Towards the east as we the eye direct,
A lofty fortress tow'ring o'er the scene
Attracts its gaze. This hath the wonder been,
The terror, admiration, of each foe :
Impregnable its walls appear ; below
The waters of destruction silent flow,
The whole encircling, while above them peep
The howitzer and gun, the portals keep,
And watch the safety of the citadel,
Prepar'd a tale of blood the enemy to tell.

} 20

But lo, the rising monarch of the skies
Reveals afar to our astonish'd eyes
A mighty army ! Shine not gloriously
Their arms ? their streamers proudly float on high !
Behold they hither come ! We recognize
Britannia's ensign as their streamer flies,
And spreads in the soft breeze of morn ! Affright
And terror seizing at th' unwonted sight
The neighb'ring villagers, they seek in flight
That safety and repose which erst was theirs.
Lo, as the glorious cavalcade appears,
Emerging from th' oblivious distance, troop

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On troop of armed horsemen lift the whoop
Of war upon the plain, and it defy.
But vain their contest with our troops, they fly, 40
Dispers'd like sand before the Syrian gale,
Cleft as the ocean's billows by the keel,
While these a harbour find. O glorious sight
Which now presents itself! In splendour dight
Stands COMBERMERE, the chief of armies, king
As 'twere of all around him! Joyous ring
Thro' heav'n the acclamations of the brave
The countless force he leads. Aloft they wave
The flag of freedom, for the battle shout,
And "Victory!" cry, as they behold each strong redoubt.

Lo, they encamp around the spacious Fort;
The siege commences 'midst the loud report
Incessant of its guns, which dun the ear.
See the great Gen'ral reconnoit'ring near,
Attended by his suite: the foe select
Him as their mark, but fire without effect,
Of aim unskilful. Now discover'd posts
Strong, and important to the rival hosts,
Behold a portion of our troops depart
These to secure, and by a contest short

But vigorous succeed. And now appear
The slaughter-breathing guns ;—th' enemy hear
The dull harsh grating of their distant wheels,
And to his idol each for conqu'ring pow'r appeals.

Hence we the garrison may view, (annoy'd
By our bold plans, decisive acts,) employ'd
In strength'ning their entrenchments—'tis so, they
(Determin'd to avoid the open fray,
Prepare them for a vigorous defence :
And, while a fire incessant pouring thence
Upon our troops, where'er assembled seen,
Repair the walls which from our vengeance screen.
But not alone they labour—we behold
Britons, whose hands are firm, whose hearts are bold,
Whose minds by science taught, with wisdom fill'd,
In mining and in countermining skill'd,
Their rivals ! These incessantly are found
In calm but vig'rous act together bound :
Strong perseverance nerving ev'ry soul,
As firm determination through the whole
Pervades, with sweet fraternal sympathy.
Now toil they 'neath earth's surface, now on high
Raise the broad parallel, the batt'ry form ;

They trench and sap, yet so divert alarm
Meanwhile to other points by feign'd attack,
That none suspect their danger, tho' no lack
Of cunning have the foe. Thus days pass on,
The struggle fierce will be, when shall the field be won ?

At length all stands prepar'd for action, all
Is ready,—will, zeal, powder, cannon, ball !
“ Who cries defiance ? Is it e'en Bhurtpore ?
Let British arguments its exil'd sense restore ! ”
Now at the word, 'midst lurid flames, the breath,
And mighty sounds, voice, of the spokesman Death,
In eloquence convincing these unmatch'd,
On wings of mighty swiftness are dispatch'd.
How dire a lesson to the foe they teach,
And how impressively submission preach !
The fortress' walls from their foundation shake,
And terror spreads, as 'neath the dreadful rake 100
The proud and sullen foe in hundreds fall,
And undistinguish'd, 'neath an ebon pall
Of thickest smoke, in dire confusion lie ;
Whence many lift a last expiring cry,
Destruction theirs ! Their cannon cease to roar,
Nor still uninterruptedly they pour

From smaller arms a fire incessant down,
Nor yells of fancied triumph silence drown ;
But shelter seeking from the deadly storm,
They spread within the citadel alarm :
There, screen'd from inj'ry, crouch, till with the day
The tempest's hush'd which kept them thus at bay :
Then, while a solemn stillness reigns, they rise,
Resolv'd the dark obscurity to prize,
The ramparts mount, and on our troops beneath
Descends the now refluxing stream of death !
But void of skill their weapons to direct,
The mandate to destroy these each reject ;
And while the spray is scatter'd thickly round
Scarce one is in its madd'ning current drown'd. 120
Unceasing they, while night and darkness reign,
A constant tho' a harmless fire maintain.

Again the day appears, again departs,
While aid the Sciences their sister Arts
In fair Britannia's struggle for the prize,
And Horror with grim Devastation flies
On molten wings abroad, and pillars rise
Of wreathing smoke to heav'n, and dreadful sounds
Are heard, and slaughter the dim vision bounds.

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Again Earth sinks in the embrace of Night,
Again returns she to the arms of Light :
Continued strife the day reveals ; the flight
Of one from the besiegers' ranks declares,
Points out, as from the fortress he repairs
Unto the ramparts, the bold rebel ! Lo,
It is himself, 'tis HERBERT, whom we know
A brave and valiant soldier ! Who can solve
The dark mysterious problem, what resolve
Of diabolic birth him traitor made ?
Methinks ambition's raging, Vengeance, bade 140
The act disloyal ; Desperation seiz'd
His soul, or thirst of fame, to be appeas'd
By some notorious act, no matter what,
Emblazoning his name or staining with a blot !

Behold, the enemy he now directs,
Instructs, and their imperfect aim corrects ;
Himself exposing coolly to our eye
In fierce bravado, while his deeds defy
The country once he serv'd ! See, see him catch
From yonder gunner's hand the burning match !
He points the gun, and, ah ! 'tis COMBERMERE
At whom the ruffian levels !—Lift the cheer

Of joy ! our gen'ral 'scapes ! His just award,
A traitor's death, shall soon the wretch reward.

Slow is the progress by our labours made,
Success howe'er shall not our arms evade :
Soon shall a breach be yonder seen ; that wall
So stedfast now, shall soon in ruins fall :
Already in the bosom of the soil
Is lodg'd the fuel which will make it boil, 160
And with expansive force lift from its base
Th' impregnable defence. Meanwhile we trace
The swift-wing'd shell, as thro' high heav'n it soars,
And like a brilliant meteor glorious tow'rs
Above the scene, till, bursting, all its charms
Prove but disguis'd destruction ! (Many forms
Hideous to view, Death sporting here assumes,
But this most terrible, in which he dooms
To flame and conflagration all around !)
Still does the loud, the oft-repeated sound
Of the artillery boom upon the ear ;
The mighty crash of shot descending near
Still thrills the nerve, and thickly flies the ball
'Neath which the en'my slain and wounded fall !

But mighty their resistance, tho' repuls'd,
Firm are they now tho' ev'ry nerve's convuls'd ;
To ev'ry challenge of our guns reply,
And death-wounds with unflinching courage buy :
Each from his post immoveable, (the shock
Of hurricanes can never raze the rock,) 180
The ramparts swept by an unsparing hand,
Annihilation meets them as they stand.

'Neath yonder bastion, lo, a mine we spring ;
The train is fir'd, hill, vale, and woodland ring
And tremble 'neath the dread explosion : torn
From earth's breast, behold on high are borne
Huge rocky fragments which obscure the day,
Until, with awful force descending, they
Crush to a shapeless mass whoe'er they meet.
“ Hurra ! hurra ! ” our triumph's shout repeat ;
For lo, as now those clouds of dust and smoke
Pass on, we see that by this mighty stroke
The lofty bastion is in ruins laid,
A passage op'd thro' which our entrance shall be made.

Galling has been the tedium of each day
To our advent'rer from this long delay :

The storm will prove how just, how true his claim
 To the proud title of A SOLDIER ! Fame
 Will with the proof shed lustre round his name :
 Or if, as sometimes fears he, frail of soul,
 Of heart too weak the dastard flesh t' control,
 He in the contest shrinks, the stern contempt
 Reward, of self and all from such sad faults exempt.

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 200

At length arrives the morning of THE STORM :
 Now at their posts the sev'ral parties form !
 Behold, in silence deep as that of death
 They stand, presuming scarce t' inhale a breath,
 Until the dark volcano's burst shall raise
 The all-important sign ; and nought betrays
 Their presence 'neath those walls which then they mount.
 But now the train is fir'd ! As from a fount
 Mysterious the flaming steam rolls on,
 Until its bed is found, its goal is won.
 Now becomes expectation pain, for all
 Is stillness, and prolong'd ; delayed the call,
 To glory, doubt, suspense, arise ! But now
 Earth heaves her breast, sighs from her bosom flow,
 The bastions trembling shake, and with a throe
 Of agony convulsing, from her womb

Th' imprison'd giant rushes ! Now a tomb 220
His place of birth becomes : th' eternal wall
From its broad base is lifted—bursts the thrall
Of Gravity, (swelling as it ascends,)
Until His mighty arm asunder rends
Its monstrous bulk ; then finds a fitting shroud
In one thick, dark, impenetrable cloud,
On which the guardian spirit of Bhurtpore,
His charge forsaking, mounts to heav'n. No more
Will he return ! The summit of the breach
Before us, lo, our troops have gain'd ; they reach
The ramparts ! Fierce and deadly now the strife,
The struggle to redeem and capture life.
The spirit of our hero now awakes ;
In signal enterprise his life he stakes :
A Hindoo of gigantic height draws nigh
With hideous yellings, brandishing on high
A keen-edg'd tulwar, while a glitt'ring shield
Of steel he lifts defensive ! Ne'er to yield
E'en to the mightiest of the mighty foe,
Till from his heart life's latest drop should flow, 240
Was not alone our hero's firm resolve ;
But such distinguish'd deeds as might absolve
His youthful errors to perform ; his aim

'Midst heroes t' win the diadem of Fame!
 The foeman he confronts, who fiercely eyes
 The adversary that his might defies,
 And to the combat springs! Now hotly clash
 Their gleaming swords, from which sparks thickly flash;
 Strain'd is each sinew, nerv'd by hate each arm,
 And rapidly descends the death-fraught storm
 Of vig'rous blows. From side to side the ground
 Is by the Hindoo chang'd, and round and round,
 Skill'd in the artifice and cunning feints
 Of eastern swordsmanship: at length he faints
 Beneath our hero's resolution, firm
 And science-guided strokes. Behold, the germ
 Of pow'r is perseverance! All in vain
 The Hindoo's desp'rate effort to maintain
 The struggle; pierc'd with wounds he trembles, sinks, 260
 And fallstoearth, whichnow his quiv'ring heart's blood drinks!

Meanwhile around the scene the foaming tide
 Of gen'ral contest spreads destruction wide:
 A fire tremendous from our batt'ries thrown
 Is hotly answer'd by the fort and town;
 While hand to hand, and shield to shield oppos'd,
 In contest with his en'my each hath clos'd.

Brave the assailants ; and th' assail'd, who crest
The bastion in strong phalanx, the behest
Of patriotic zeal arous'd t' obey,
(Or hope or desperation win the day)
Not less courageous ; for while madness nerves
The one, stern resolution still preserves
The other's pow'r to strike a fearful blow .
Yet is the contest brief : Britannia's foe
Defies in vain her might, and 'neath her sword
Is palsied by defeat. The cheering word
" Advance ! " is heard : the flag of triumph waves
O'er the huge parapet : destruction paves
The victors' road unto the citadel !
These onward move, and now dividing, quell 280
The enemy by overwhelming might,
And clear th' adjacent ramparts. Now the sight
Discerns th' united column dashing on ;
Sees bastion after bastion nobly won,
Until possession of the walls complete
Those also to the town despatch'd defeat
Have thither borne, and desp'rate conflict wag'd
Around the citadel, while foes encag'd
Therein fire from each loophole in its wall,
Themselves concealing. Here a myriad fall !

The party thus who storm the cavalier :—
A second now behold are drawing near
Led by th' intrepid NICOLLS, (first where'er
In danger's path Britannia's sons appear,)
Who, the left breach ascending with success,
A furious encounter, their ingress
Awhile preventing, met. There EDWARDS fell,
PITMAN the brave was slain. Resolv'd to sell
The vict'ry dear, the foe their guns had turn'd
Towards the ramparts : then our heroes learn'd
Indeed their pow'r. But tho' a moment check'd,
Our troops yet never opposition reck'd
When bent on triumph ! With one thrilling cheer
They onward rush—its brave defenders clear
From ev'ry gun—then hasten to combine
With those before them who triumphant shine ;
And join'd by them who escalading won
Th' re-ent'ring angle, move victorious on,
While in the distance they the horse espy
Watching a body of the en'my nigh,
Expos'd to all the bastions of the south,
And ent'ring as it were the cannon's mouth ;
Three glorious cheers these give, their colours wave ;—
Well understood the language of the brave.

Meanwhile the gallant ADAMS (known by Fame)
Proves just renown the glory of his name,
And ent'ring at the Agra gate, disarms
All further opposition to our arms,
Compels subjection, (tho' by death alone,) 320
The foe constrains our greater might to own.
Thus is the fortress won! The citadel
Alone remains unconquer'd. Who may tell
The numbers who have fall'n this day a prey,
Borne from life's fascinating scene away
By the bright steel—the thunderbolt of war—
Crush'd 'neath th' oblivious wheels of Battle's car?
Still must these onward roll, *that* shall be won,
Our labour is not till its capture done.

But, lo, the chieftain flies, and in pursuit
A troop is now dispatch'd! The num'rous suite
Who the usurper tend awhile protract
The arduous struggle which ensues; but tact
And skill superior in our troops prevail,
And they defeat, their master capture, wail!

And now prepare they to complete the prize
By blowing up the gate which yonder lies,

Chief portal of the citadel ; when high
Above the battlements is seen to fly
The white flag of SURRENDER, by Despair
Uplifted ! Acclamations rend the air 340
As the wide portals are asunder thrown,
And fair Britannia calls Bhurtpore her own.
For India's glory and Hindostan's pride
In this was centred, and with this allied ;
'Twas this which as the champion of their race
First boldly bore defiance on its face ;
Which pointed out a path and led the way
To freedom, from an e'er abhorrent sway ;
Which held the torch our glitt'ring throne to fire,
And make the kingdom our funereal pyre.
Now is its glory humbled with the dust,
And they despair who here had plac'd their trust :
Extinguish'd is the brand in ocean's deep,
And hate arous'd sinks yet again to sleep !

The traitor too is captur'd ; nor alone
Stands HERBERT ; all the guilt is not his own :
Two bear him company, whose downcast eye
And mournful look declare with him to die
Is their anticipated fate. Most just

360
Their expectation. To be scorn'd, and thrust
For ever from our gallant army, doom'd
To be in exile by remorse consum'd,
In mercy is howe'er their sentence. So
Is not their leader's ; on his iron brow
Too deeply stamp'd is infamy's vile brand
To be eras'd by any save Death's hand :
And the same spot which witness'd his dark deed
Now sees him hang a corse, its rightful meed.

Now is the triumph perfected ; the song
Of Victory is swiftly borne along 370
On the soft pinions of the joyous breeze ;
The hills and vales around the chorus seize,
And with the woods prolong the noble strain,
"THE SUN OF BRITAIN'S GLORY NE'ER SHALL WANE !"

C A N T O VI

ARGUMENT.

RETURN TO CANTONMENTS—GLADNESS AND GRIEF—THE CHANGING YEAR—
A SOLDIER—HIS SOLILOQUIES—FEASTS AND FESTIVALS—PARADE—TARGET
PRACTICE—THE FUNERAL—THE SONG OF THE WARRIORS—COMING WAR

" The food of the wolf and the worm,
The sport of the sun and the storm ;—
The eagle and fox shall take their fare
From the arm which could do, and the heart which could dare : "

" Honour unto the brave !
Where'er they draw the sword ,
Honour to those who crave
But fame as their reward :
In camp, in regal hall,
On mountain, or in cave,
At beauty's festival,
Still, ' Honour to the Brave ! "

H M PARKER

CANTO VI.

BENOLD, rejoicing in the smile of Fame,
In the proud title glory's wreath to claim ;
Exulting in the deeds each arm has wrought,
The brilliant honours which those deeds have bought ;
The gallant corps which numbers with its brave
The hero of my song, (o'er whom still wave
The banners of prosperity and life,)
Is now returning from the scene of strife ;
And many tear 'midst triumph's smile is shed,
In mem'ry of those left behind—the dead.
Oft when the eye mechanically seeks
Some comrade in his place, his absence speaks
The startling tale that he no more exists :—
Then is its sparkling dimm'd by sadness' mists,
For then the heart its fellowship recalls,

And the mind droops, the soul harsh sorrow galls ;
 By grave experience taught each deeply feels
 All is for ever gone which once death steals ;
 No earthly pow'r can joys once slain restore ;
 The pleasures of the past return no more.

20

And he has fall'n ! our hero's early friend,
 Who hither fatally his steps did bend :
 Infuriated by despair, and stung
 With madness, 'midst the foe himself he flung,
 And was in pieces by their scim'tars hewn :
 His body now lies o'er the ramparts strewn,
 And oh, what dread example this holds out,
 To those who bow beneath inactive doubt !

The cantonments are gain'd ; around them throng
 With eager looks (succeeded by the song
 Of rapt'rous joy, or wail of deepest woe,)
 Enamour'd maids, who seek the fate to know
 Of lovers ; fond and faithful wives, who haste
 To meet their spouses, and at once to taste
 The bliss of a reunion which they dream,
 'Neath warm Imagination's sunny beam,
 By heav'n's especial favour will be theirs ;

And children, who each in perspective shares
Largely the sweet embraces of its sire :
In ev'ry breast is felt affection's sacred fire ! 40

Proclaim'd to all the deeds of self-willed Fate,
No more on Hope they with impatience wait ;
In Joy's bright train, link'd in one dear embrace,
They walk who have not in Grief's ret'nue place,
A contrast wide presenting. HERE, around
Their cheerful parents, smiling infants bound
In ecstasy of heart ; the maiden hangs
Enraptur'd on her lover's arm, the pangs
Of harsh anxiety for ever o'er,
Forgotten all the griefs she knew before,
In the intensity of soft delight,
Which hails his unscath'd coming from the fight.
THERE weeps the young, the early widow'd bride,
Who has but tasted ere the tree has died
Passion's rich fruit, and now is left alone
To mourn it wither'd ; the heart-laden moan
Of long beloved wives swells on the air,
And parents wring their hands and wildly stare,
While orphans lift a loud complaint on high,
Inviting pity from each one who wanders nigh. 60

But, as successively the months revolve,
 Th' excited elements in peace dissolve,
 And ev'ry cloud dispersing, o'er the scene
 Calm smiling pleasure now resumes its reign ;
 For seldom grief's soft bud 'midst action flow'rs,
 And war's engrossing game e'er rapture overpow'rs.

Now pass on slowly undistinguish'd years,
 Oblivion's prim'val grasp escaping ; tears
 In each are shed, and smiles to earth are born :
 But from Mars' temple ne'er the glorious morn
 Of battle hither dawns upon his sons ;
 No more the helmet or the cuirass dons
 The warrior for the strife. The glad return
 Of Spring, bright almoner of Health, (who, born
 Of healing Winter, Nature's fiat makes,
 Herald of his malignant rival,) wakes
 The sylvan songster's note ; the woods with joy
 Of tribes a multitude resound, alloy
 Of grief or care unknown. Pierce Summer's glow
 Dries streams as rivers onward taught to flow 80
 By aqueous Autumn ; from the desert waste,
 Calls cruel Plague ; loads, as they onward haste,
 The furious winds with fire ; dilutes the air ;

The blood-thirst rouses in the forest lair ;
And makes vitality a torment dire.
Th' Autumnal hurricane, the lofty choir
Of ocean, o'er the land forth swelling sweeps ;
Each mighty cataract of heav'n o'erleaps
Or bursts its confines, and upon the earth
Descends o'erwhelming : jungles dank give birth
To pestilence ; and glooms perpetual, save
When for a moment rays of brightness lave
Its broad expanse, the firmament enwrap ;
The lightning's flash is seen, and heard the clap
Of thunders than which mightier ne'er launch'd Jove !
Winter arises, Earth and Heav'n bids prove
Allegiance to his throne ; the struggling pow'rs
Etherial subdues ; rich blessings show'rs
With lib'ral hand abroad ; bids worlds revive
And shout with gladness, and creation strive
To do him homage by rejoicing earth :
But neither to the battle-morn gives birth,
Nor calls the soldier to the wide stretch'd plain,
To fight for glory and for fame again !

100

“ For fame ! ”—Ah, vainly dreams the soldier, who
By adverse fortune drifted thither, drew

The sword of Britain in her lowest ranks,
That e'er such will be his ! The lofty banks
Which edge the stream indeed may be his seat,
Whence its clear waters may his vision greet ;
E'en (in his favour should the Fates decide)
May on its bright, its lucid surface, ride :
But oh, to taste the element, to drink
And quench his thirst, or from the rocky brink
To leap into its tide, a moment lave
Therein, this is denied the humble brave !
Truly t' establish firm a right to claim
Th' illustrious title of a Briton ; tame
Wild, warm ambition to obedience, yet
Its pristine vigour till life's sun has set
Preserve, and e'er unconquerable to be
In the important hour, is glory,—free
Flows the pure stream self-gratulation thence ;
But this must e'en suffice : the fountain whence
Those waters spring, which satisfy the thirst
Of just renown, with these ne'er mingle ! Nurs'd
On ardent Patriotism's genial breast,
And on its vitals fed ; at the behest
Of monarchy danger and death to seek
The warrior departs, to ev'ry freak

Of chance a prey devotes himself, his life
 Prepar'd to yield a sacrifice in strife ;
 For all on earth save vict'ry yields regard,
 And reaps in self-approval his reward."

Thus oft soliloquizing as he pac'd
 Some solitary midnight post, and trac'd
 'The past with mental eye, our hero sigh'd,
 O'er hope which Circumstance had long defied ;
 (Braving the tyrant, though to clanging chains
 Of dark improbability, and pains 140
 Of futile struggles to be free, consign'd ;)
 O'er energies, flung to the scatt'ring wind ;
 Deeds, which a POLLIO e'en might boast, unknown ,
 And valour worthy of a conqu'ror's throne
 Concealed in the meretricious blaze
 Of rank, of wealth, of title's dazzling rays.

" Oh ! what," cried he, " did not the lofty soul
 Of chivalry lead onward to the goal
 Of mighty enterprise the soldier, e'er
 While thus despised could allure him there ?
 Can barrenness a stately race give birth ;
 Or glorious suns arise from rayless earth ?

Can fountains well forth from the granite rock ?
Oh, do not reason, truth, experience, mock !
It was not thus with Rome's fam'd legions ; thus
Had we ne'er known the might of **MARIUS** ;
The deeds of **NIGER** had to us been strange ;
Ne'er had we heard brave **PERTINAX**' exchange
Of footman's spear for the imperial robe ; 160
Nor had the Cæsars o'er the circling globe
The sceptre sway'd. It was not so with France,
When 'gainst the world **NAPOLÉON** couch'd his lance ;
Fair Naples hail'd the bold chasseur her lord ;
Command,—a peerage,—dukedom,—gave reward
To the intrepid **NEX** ; the haughty Rhine
Beheld **MOREAU** a chief illustrious shine.
Nor stood alone this trio : numbers won
The glorious prize which was denied to none.

“ Come, oh ye visions of my youthful home,
To cheer an exile's with'ring heart ; oh, come,
Vigour anew inspire ; to brave the storm
Of future years assist me : ye the charm
And talisman of life alone possess !
Your bright original must yield redress
To hope, so long enthrall'd,—anxiety,

Of her in bondage born, compel to fly,
 And elsewhere find abode ; give full requite
 For joys 't has stolen ; round my soul a light
 Diffuse which may departed bloom restore ;
 And be my guide unto the heav'n to which we soar ! 180

“ Yet what is sweet as is the clarion's sound ?
 Where shall such transport as in battle found
 Be e'er discover'd ?—Only love can yield
 Pleasures ecstatic, madd'ning, as in field
 Of contest found ; and these to me are seal'd !
 Away, away, anticipation, thought !
 Mars hath my heart, my soul, of Venus bought !”

Thus to his native land the warrior turns,
 When disappointments freeze, for warmth ; when burns
 A fire within, for cooling streams ; his soul
 On this revolves as earth on either pole.
 But broad the ocean whose expanse divides
 From those blest shores where in far distance hides
 The only spot on earth he loves ; and ne'er
 He fears 'twill be his lot his dwelling there
 To fix ; so strives to concentrate his mind
 On such enjoyments as he here may find ;

And if one scene of constant strife were his,
Would count it pleasure, and esteem it bliss.

200

While flies time onward with unwearying wing,
The changing seasons, each in order, bring
The merry festival our hearts to cheer :
Hilarious welcomes to the new-born year
Are ever giv'n, replenish'd well the board
O'er which is freely and devoutly pour'd
The spirit of true fellowship. The sons
Of fair Hibernia, (who heed not the frowns
Of Fortune,) banish grief, drive care away,
And celebrate in wine the happy day
Of their fam'd saint and patron. And the Scot
Rejoices, while lamenting o'er his lot,
When he the champion of his stalwart race
Commemorates. (With what enchanting grace
The bounteous seasons each spread forth their hands
To bless the poor.) Blithe Christmas broken bands
Of brotherhood unites ; pleasures long dead
Esteem'd, or to the shades of Mem'ry fled,
Calls back, revives, and e'en yields new delights :
While each departing year bequest indites
Upon the heart of each, as round his couch

220

They meet, reminiscence sweet to vouch,
That though far distant from his native land,
Each Briton has receiv'd some token at its hand.

Meanwhile each day some duty or parade
Demands attention, and illumines the shade
Cast o'er the mind whene'er the hours oppress.
Assembling now in full reg'mental dress,
The Commandant inspects them, marks with pride,
Grandeur with strength, display with pow'r allied,
At his disposal, to his simplest nod
Obedient. To negligence the rod
He gives ; presents approval to regard ;
Holds forth to merit the supreme reward
Of honour, glory, and renown ! E'en so
Is oft renew'd ambition's dying glow,
And they induc'd, whom Care with Hope had fled,
To call for their return, and in firm union wed.

Of too the target calls on each to pay
The tribute of an hour, and all obey.
In sections form'd, each company by files
Or single men approaches, (and the trials
Of skill are oft severe—assur'd the aim

Determines not unfrequently the claim
Of him who it directs, to life or death
On battle field, each seeks to win the wreath
Giv'n to successful emulation,) stands,
And when the chevron'd leader so commands
Makes "ready!" then with slow, delib'rate arm,
The weapon lifts, marks well the circling form
Concentred 'fore him, and the trigger draws!
Loud the report, the aim precise—a pause—
The first position is resum'd, again
He loads, presents. No charges now remain;
The arms examin'd and ranks clos'd, away
They march, their labours finish'd for the day.

Ah, 'midst the rigours of a tropic clime,
How few can friendship cultivate with Time!
He steals the roses early from the cheek,
Quickly the body robs of strength, till weak,
Defenceless, pow'rless, to the grave it sinks,
Bound in the chain which to corruption links.

. 260

Withhold not thou the tribute of a tear
From him who lies thus bound on yonder bier.
Brave as the untam'd king of Afric's wild,

Affection claim'd his spirit as her child ;
Stern and severe in duty's path, he bent
At Pity's shrine, an ear compassion lent ;—
Drew, when his country bade, 'gainst mercy steel'd,
But, sheath'd the sword, with balm of deepest symp'thy
[heal'd.

Grand is the closing scene of martial life,
Consigning e'er to peace the sons of strife !
The band, forth pouring a soul-moving strain,
Precede the sad, the melancholy train,
Respect demanding of the throng who view
The last of one so valiant and so true ;
With solemn step and grave demean they come,
In order next, who bear him to the tomb ;
While others, with a tear to Friendship's call
Responding, on each side support the pall: 280
On this in melancholy state is laid
The warrior's e'er much lov'd and trusty blade.
A party in full uniform succeed,
With arms revers'd in sorrow for the dead ;
And undistinguish'd crowds of mourners find
Full sympathy with sim'lar crowds behind.

Where yonder stands the lofty tam'rind tree,

A Golgotha of British exiles see !
 Its gates, which to the mansions of repose
 And silence lead, th' attendant open throws,
 And the procession enters. Now they stand
 Around the gaping pit, they lift the hand
 And voice in supplication unto God
 For him they lay beneath th' oblivious sod.
 Bequeathing dust to dust : then with the knell
 Of three loud vollies bid him e'er farewell !

What thousands thus have perish'd in life's bloom
 Consign'd unto the dark, neglected tomb, 300
 Far, far divided from their natal spot,
 And e'en their last abiding place forgot ;
 While deeds by them perform'd, proclaim'd by fame,
 Of nations, honour, admiration, claim !
 For 'tis with soldiers as with luckless bards,
 The memory of their deeds alone rewards.

Years have rolled by—fourteen have disappear'd
 From Time's mysterious register, since heard
 The shout of exultation o'er Bhurtpore ;
 And few whose voices then were heard to soar
 On high, may now be found among our corps,

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When lo, th' horizon clouds o'ercast, the star
 Of battle, radiating from afar,
 Sheds beams reviving o'er the scene; the cry
 Resounds, "To meet a mighty foe, and die
 Or triumph, wake, sons of the glitt'ring sword!"
 Might, Passion, from their couches spring, restor'd
 To life: Hope and Ambition, arm'd with strength,
 Awake at the loud signal, and at length
 Ally themselves again unto the soul : 320
 Transport of heart reigus o'er, pervades the whole,
 And from the quiv'ring lip the rapt'rous song
 Of many a warrior of the valiant throng
 Bursts forth, is thus by soft-wing'd zephyrs borne along.

SONG.

I.

WE warriors, whose souls spurn restraint and are free
 As the eagle who roams in mid air,
 Scorn the pomp of proud wealth, nor care what fortune yield,
 So we have the broad Sword for our share.
 With this talisman arm'd we may conquer the world,
 And make ourselves lords of the sea:
 Then hurra for the banner, wherever unfurl'd,
 And the life of a Soldier for me!

II.

When the clarion is heard, on the foe, lo, we rush,
As lions arous'd from their lair :
Do they stand ?—they are slain : Do they fly ?—we pursue,
And the prostrate alone do we spare.
Then the spoils of the victor, the chaplet of fame,
Entwin'd round the brow of the free,—
Here's hurra for the banner, the battle, the sword,
And the life of a Soldier for me !

III.

No mistress we own save Bellona the fierce,
No champion acknowledge save Mars :
At danger we laugh ; we know not dismay ;
The proofs of our valour—our scars !
In the flash of our weapons, lo, Victory gleams,
And its radiance illumines earth and sea :
Then hurra for the banner, the battle, the sword,
And the life of a Soldier for me !

Now gird they on fresh perseverance, wake
Patience and Fortitude, alliance make
Again with Enterprize, and Zeal revive ;
For e'en with Affghans are they soon to strive,

And with the hardy, bold, ferocious sons
Of Beloochistan struggle. British guns,
And Britons staunch to man them, will prevail;
And soon from 'midst the tribes shall rise the wail
Of dire defeat, as, in their Alpine caves,
Of consternation and despair the slaves,
They hide; while new-born rays their lustre shed,
The halo brighten which encircles Albion's head' 336

END OF CANTO VI.

C A N T O VII.

ARGUMENT.

THE AFGHANISTAN CAMPAIGN—COMMENCEMENT OF THE MARCH—DELHI—
KURNAUL—THE PUNJAB—THE INDUS—THE HIMALAYAS—CANDAHAR—
GRAND SPECTACLE—THE PASS—GHUZNÏ—THE FORTRESS—THE STORM—
THE HERO SEVERELY WOUNDED—CABUL.

Fingal, like a beam from heaven, shone in the midst of his people. His heroes gather round him. He sends forth the voice of his power : " Raise my standards on high ; spread them on Lena's wind, like the flames of an hundred hills ! Let them sound on the winds of Erin, and remind us of the fight." Now, like an hundred different winds, that pour through many vales ; divided, dark, the sons of Selma advanced ; Cromla echoed around ! " How can I relate the deaths," when we closed in the strife of arms ! O daughter of Toscar ! bloody were our hands ! The gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell, like the banks of the roaring Cona !"

Ossian

CANTO VII.

WHEN Hannibal against Italia drew
The sword which in his hand defeat ne'er knew ;
His mighty army marshall'd, to the fray
With Scipio and Sempronius led the way,
Grand was the sight, magnificent the train !
No foe from admiration could refrain,
As 'neath the Carthaginian banner stood
Her best and bravest sons of purest blood,
Prepar'd to climb above the hills, or dive
'Neath an abyss, to meet Rome's legions and to strive !

So when, assembling from each distant part,
(E'en as returns the life-blood to the heart,)
Our troops their strength concentr'd, and display'd
Their might in action, glorious was their shade.
Then rose in all his glory stately WAR :
The rolling of their cannon wheels afar

Was heard, like mighty thund'rings : in the sun
Their standards with meteoric splendor shone,
And ev'ry sword was bright, and ev'ry lance
Invited conquest by its gleam : the prance 20
Impatient, the wild champ, and fiery neigh
Of many a charger brooking not delay,
Was seen and heard : and warlike strains arose
To heav'n defiance breathing to their foes ;
The ARMY OF THE INDUS stood array'd
In all the majesty of pow'r, and all the pomp of parade !

And now commence they the resolv'd campaign,
Ardent, enthusiastic ; each to gain
A name of terror for their country, spread
Its fame, and dye their gleaming falchions red
In foemen's blood, resolv'd. Though distant far
The goal, the field and scene of future war,
Stern Resolution, Patience, thither guide ;
Triumph, where'er they be, attend thou by their side !

Points to Hindostan's border now their way ;
Swiftly progressing each successive day,
They on the Mogul's wide domain encroach :
Majestic Delhi greets their bright approach,

And smiles in reminiscence of times past ;
 Kurnaul astonish'd sees their numbers vast 40
 Review'd in proud brigade upon her plains ;
 Nor from expression of delight refrains
 The boundary, no more their path to stay,
 But " Onward !" smiles, " no danger shall betray !"

Now opes the fertile Punjaub to the view ;
 Enchanting are the scenes they journey through :
 The fields are deck'd in robes of fairy hue,
 While lofty trees their noble boughs expand,
 And clust'ring fruits invite the gath'rer's hand.
 This may with eastern scenes supremely vie ;
 It captivated Alexander's eye.
 The Hyphasis we see afar ; 'twas there
 His soldiers to advance no further sware.
 Yonder the mighty Zaradrus behold !
 Oft to her audience history hath told
 Where once the clear Hydaspes proudly roll'd,
 Whose rapid course the Macedonian brav'd,
 When he to meet the Indian monarch crav'd ;
 Upon whose banks, impatient of delay,
 Turn'd he th' inglorious night to triumph's day ; 60
 And when the battle, by his foe renew'd,

The shore with dead and wounded thickly strew'd,
Requir'd submission of the conquer'd king.
But such a tribute 'twas refused to bring :
" The mighty Porus ne'er would be a slave,
But e'er a monarch ! " the reply he gave.
Such magnanimity the conqu'ror won ;
His kingdom to Hindostan's noble son
Immediate was restor'd, and large increase
Of proud dominion giv'n ; eternal peace
Was sworn, inviolable friendship found,
Concord the monarchs' hearts inseparably bound !

Long, arduous is the march, yet none repine ;
Their path palms strew, and glorious vict'ries line !
The chiefs of Hyd'rabad and Roree low
Before their conqu'rors in submission bow,
Proclaim their all-subduing pow'r divine ;
At length, behold, on Indus' bank they shine !
Here Alexander, Timour, Gengis Khan,
In stately pride led on the mighty van ;
Rome knew the stream, Greece heard its fame afar,
A pow'rful friend, or opponent in war.
The giant Him'laya, majestic, wild,
Claims fondly the proud Titan as its child,

Whose banks, there lin'd by proud Shikargahs, (known
 As fields of choicest sport for chiefs alone,)
 For martial operations here present
 A base unrivalled in the Orient ;
 No empire save Hindostan e'er could boast
 So grand a frontier to so vast a coast !

How stately now their passage o'er the stream,
 E'en as th' illusion of ecstatic dream :
 So proud the concentration, and so grand
 The action of a pow'r nought might withstand !
 Far, far beyond the wave which rolls beneath
 They go, o'er fruitful vale and desert heath,
 To drag th' usurper from the Affghan throne
 Restore its rightful king, Britannia's friend, his own !

Far, far above them tow'r the mighty hills,
 Vast bound'ry of Tibet ! What wonder fills,
 What deep reflections seize upon the breast !
 When earth from chaos sprang, arose yon crest,
 In altitude supreme, to list heav'n's chime !
 Now, laden with the passing gifts of Time,
 It proudly stands in majesty sublime,
 Imprinted on its brow the frigid kiss

100

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Of many a cent'ry, sire of woe or bliss
 To ancestors whose mem'ry long has slept.
 What, what is man, or who his lot hath wept?
 Who in the bosom of despair hath slept?
 Or who hath joy'd, as though earth might behold
 Immortal raptures cast in mortal mould?
 Here let him turn and gaze, where gaz'd before
 Millions who can look on the scene no more;
 Behold the littleness of mortal man,
 Whose strength is weakness, and whose days a span:
 If sorrow torture, resignation wed,—
 In peace the earth shall pillow soon his head;
 And if prosperity exalt, prepare!
 Death's sombre chamber he must shortly share.
 Our ancestors renown'd had too their day,
 Our orbits course we now—but where are they?

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Yet as this proudly soars o'er all beside,
 And gazes from aloft o'er regions wide,
 As independent of this lower sphere;
 So, while the Warrior brandishes the spear
 Of chivalry against an hostile world,
 And triumphs wheresoc'er his flag's unfurl'd,
 He scorns each obstacle which may surround,

Or would the view of pure ambition bound ;
Above the poverty of Nature soars,
Each field of proud adventure sees, explores,
Becomes the lord of all his eye surveys,
The theme of admiration, wonder, praise !

And now as they advance, behold, the foe
Intention of resistance 'gin to show ;
Attack detachments with o'erwhelming force,
Seize on the camels and the straggling horse,
And their communication intercept.
Vain is their care, their watchfulness, except
To make the loss of things more precious wept ;
Until severe example's made, and taught
A lesson dire to each marauder caught ;
E'en then their path is not from prowlers free,
And daily, hourly contests we may see ;
Until a city rises from afar,
Which they rejoice to hear is Candahar.

} 140

Ye who the son of Timour's glory prize,
To celebrate his restoration rise !
Towards the north, on yonder plain, behold
The throne Britannia will henceforth uphold ;

And lo, as Phœbus rises o'er the scene,
Our army, clad in all its glorious sheen,
Comes forth, to hail and to salute the king !
With the loud echo of artill'ry ring
The hills, the vales, and Shoojah Shah appears :
A royal salvo the glad tidings bears,
And proclamation makes of his approach ;
That none may on the monarch's path encroach
His own contingent forms a martial street,
Through which he now advances. Thousands greet
The glory of his presence ; with acclaim,
Aloud, enthusiastic shout his name ;
Their standards waving with exultant joy,
While studious strains of harmony employ
Their instruments and pow'rs of music ! Lo,
The musnud he ascends ; before him bow
His joyous people : the majestic line
Of warriors, who in dazzling splendour shine,
Their arms " Present !" again the mighty voice
Of the artill'ry thunders forth " Rejoice !"
And sounds of glory rise upon the breeze
Which wafts the wond'rous strain o'er distant seas ;
Ne'er was there seen a spectacle so grand,
Since Shoojah ceas'd to rule in pride the land !

Again they march, and soon leave far behind
The vale of Candahar, the Turnuk find.
As when Napoleon to the Moskwa led
The sons of Gaul, who oft for him had bled,
Famine took captive, made their ranks a prey, 180
Cold petrified their might and strew'd their way
With carcasses stol'n from the mighty host ;
Each stragg'ler irretrievably was lost ;
The rear by hordes of Cossacks daily crost,
Whose swords dark hate and fury lent an edge,
Which of revenge insatiable gave pledge :—
So stand our forces here, with sparing food,
Harass'd by foes who shed each wand'rer's blood,
And e'en the road, to stay our army, flood :
The vital stream congeals within their veins,
The sinews of each heart exertion strains,
Disease creeps in, and Death bears many away
From all the glory of the coming fray.

But *Perseverance* is the Briton's boast ;
Its spirit moves and animates our host ;
Strength to their arms and sharpness to their swords,
Courage midst danger gives, and hope affords ;—

The end of these their suff'rings now is nigh ;
 Well may they ev'ry mortal pow'r defy.

It is a noble and a glorious sight, 200
 To see our warriors speeding to the fight ;
 Their raptures witness as these scenes disclose
 At length the gath'ring of the clans their foes.
 " Huzza !" the goal is won : afar appears
 The fort which Ghuzni's ancient title bears.
 Lo ! on a mound the rampart rises high,
 And num'rous tow'rs we faintly hence espy,
 Which flank its sides ; a fosse and ditch surround,
 And the approach of hostile footsteps bound :
 Walls newly built the various portals screen ;
 An outwork on the river's bank is seen ;
 'Tis strong, nor half its might do we behold ;
 Surely our trav'lers have false stories told. }
 Here will be vig'rous deeds of mighty mould,
 And noble sacrifice of life display'd,
 If stern uncompromising war be made !

But see, the foe have our advance discern'd :
 They throng the ramparts ; now their guns are turn'd

Upon the leading column ; see the flash !
The hail comes following on the thunder's crash : 220
Reports of musquetry, with harsher sounds,
Are recognis'd, as from yon outworks, mounds,
And garden walls, the foemen's scouts fire down.
But soon they flee : a party forward thrown
Pursue and rout them. Now upon the fort
Our batt'ries open ; and the loud report
Of cannon at the Gen'ral's mighty word,
The bursting of the shrapnel shell, is heard
Within the town, and consternation vast
By their dread execution o'er it cast.
Soon is the present object gain'd,—(to prove
The en'my's strength,) our squadrons onward move,
(The firing ceas'd,) and an encampment form.
Now reconnoitred, 'tis resolv'd to storm
At once the fortress by the Cabool gate,
(Breaching a process tedious to await,)
Our fortune win and seal the en'my's fate ;
The hour of operation midnight nam'd,
When each may prove himself who fame, renown hath
[claim'd.
Meanwhile the Ghiljee chiefs are hov'ring nigh, 240
Hence we their picquets plainly may espy ;

Three thousand sabres muster 'neath their flag !
Report declares Mahommed will not lag
In his advance from Cabool us to meet,—
But let him come ; let all their pow'r unite ;
We, we shall prove victorious in the fight.

Look to the southward of our camp, and see
The mountains crown'd with martial majesty :—
It is the foe ! Behold, in Phœbus' beams
Uplifted high, the Moslem crescent gleams ;
The holy flag of green and white's unfurl'd,
Which bore destruction o'er the Eastern world ;
The Affghan costume too we now discern,
And in a moment their design shall learn.
Ah ! on the Shah's encampment they would seize :
Up, sons of Mars ! to sleep and slumber cease :
The en'my see ! Mount, ye who wield the lance ;
To the attack, ye horsemen bold, advance ;
A gun immediate bring, and charge it well ;
Leave not one foeman his escape to tell. 260

Spur, spur your steeds ! Hurra ! we soon shall meet :
Charge, charge the infidels ere they retreat :
Bravo, my heroes, bring their standards down !

Your might confusion 'mong the mob has thrown ;
And see how thickly 'neath our shot they fall.
Ha, ha ! they are repuls'd ; they flee ; and all
Who've power again ascend the lofty hills.
Here ye must stay, my troopers, 'gainst your wills :
Up, up, ye footmen, force them from each height,
Display your courage and evince your might.

How gallantly these now the mountains climb,
And 'neath a galling fire improve the time—
Bring down the foe in numbers from their perch,
'Till many for a place of hiding search ;
Avail themselves of ev'ry ledge and rock,
The fury of each mad fanatic mock,
As 'neath the symbol of their cunning creed,
By the high priest unfurl'd, they wounded bleed ;
While those unhurt deem this a sacred charm,
Potent to shield from ev'ry sim'lar harm. 280
To this our footmen point ; to bring this down
They strive. Now triumph soon their toils will crown,
For see, it falls ! Up rush they with a cheer,
Grateful as sweetest music to the ear ;
While on before them panic-stricken fly
The host of the opposers, each with cry

Of wild surprise and terror, for 'tis prov'd
 The faith in dark credulity they've lov'd,
 And made their heart's chief confidence and pride,
 Is false ! Despair o'erwhelms them in its tide,
 Each nerve relaxes at the dreadful thought ;
 The vict'ry's easily won which was so boldly sought.

Soon 'twill be midnight ; we awhile will rest ;
 Go we forth then the garrison to test.

Behold the hour ! the hour of shades and sprites,
 Of superstition and of witchcraft's rites,
 And haughty Night her sable sceptre wields
 In frowning majesty o'er Ghuzni's fields.
 Yet fix thine eye, thou yonder may'st discern
 As 'twere a moving shade ; and if thou turn 300
 Another thou more plainly may'st behold :
 It is our infantry : no ear hath told
 Their steps ; they now advance towards the fort ;
 And hark ! the cavalry are near ; their short
 And careful step, if down thou bend thine ear,
 Thou may'st distinguish : yonder they appear !
 " What is that deep, that harsh and grating sound ?"
 The wheels of our artill'ry shake the ground !

These in the rear their order'd station take,
Whence they the ramparts and the fort may rake ;
The infantry brigades in front are found ;
And like a zone the horse the whole encircle round.

What noble sacrifice of life ! what true
And ardent patriotism now we view !
“ Yon gate we must burst open ; who will bear
The powder thither ? who to fix it dare ? ”
“ I, I,” cry num’rous eager voices ; “ I
The danger for the glory will defy.”
Ambitious Britons ! daily wooing fame,
Who shall dispute or who adjudge your claim ?
“ Let seniority the point decide :
McLeod, Peat, Durand, ’tis yours thus tried.”
These now depart, attended to the gate,
Aided by men who on their orders wait.

320

Meanwhile a false attack has lur’d the foe ;
Towards the quarter whence it comes they go
In force which leaves but few the front to guard,
And nought the fortress’ capture may retard !
Brave DENNIE leads the storm ; a fire directs
Upon the parapets ; and those selecta

Which bear immediately upon the gate
As central points. Not one dares lift his pate
Amongst the foe. These fire from loopholes down
Upon th' approaching party ; earth is thrown
Below in masses huge, the troops to crush.
But Fortune's frown rests on the en'my. Hush !
The bags of powder on the gate are hung ;
The port-fire is attached ; Contempt hath flung
A veil across the vision of the foe ;
Our aim is unsuspected, and the blow 340
Unthought of which is to be levell'd now.
The port-fire is ignited ; now the flame
Creeps onward : how exciting is the game !
'Thas reached its destination : see the flash !
How mighty and how terrific the crash !
The gate is laid in ruins ! to the front
Ye Britons haste, invincible as wont.

The bugle sounds " Advance !" On, on they rush,
Each obstacle their path impeding crush ;
And though the ruins of the gate impede
Their way, impetuous as the Tartar steed
Press on, establish well each step they gain.
Astonish'd at this wond'rous coup-de-main,

The foeman's strength awhile is paralyz'd,—
 Their dark inaction well our troops have priz'd
 Ere opposition meets them. But awoke
 From stupefaction, now with madness choke
 The foe rush forward sword in hand to stay
 The British column ; but resistless they
 As ocean's swell, or as the chainless winds, 360
 The enemy repulse, of whom each finds
 That stands, destruction, death. But now dispers'd
 Before our troops, by dire confusion curs'd,
 By terror robb'd e'en of their self-command,—
 While o'er them hover, and amidst them stand
 The imps who form Defeat's infernal band ;
 A raking fire our infantry pour in,
 Where'er to congregate they would begin ;
 And even Nature 'gainst them seems to strive,
 Nor will a single ray of brightness give,
 To shew them 'gainst what they have to contend,—
 They flee, their guns desert : their steps some bend
 Towards their houses, refuge take within,
 Block up the doors, and, with sardonic grin
 Of hatred, from the windows fire below
 Upon our troops as through the streets they go ;
 While others from huge heights advent'rous throw

Themselves, pursuit and capture to escape !
 Meanwhile our batt'ries pour their shell and grape
 Into the citadel, each rampart clear, 380
 Masses annihilate, and kindle fear
 Within the stoutest noblest foeman's heart ;
 Each is transfix'd by Horror's thrice-barb'd dart.

Meanwhile the gallant THACKWELL, whose proud name
 The field of Waterloo has giv'n to Fame,
 The fortress with his cavalry surrounds,
 And keeps a watch o'er the adjacent grounds ;
 Raising a barrier thus against the flight
 Of those who would evade Britannia's might ;
 Preventing the approach to them of aid,
 And casting o'er their ev'ry hope a shade.

'Tis well ; our forces now have done their part,
 Their valiance, might, have made the contest short ;
 For see, as day breaks forth, its light displays
 The fort abandon'd ; and, save where the gaze
 A sullen captive meets, or when the ear
 By matchlocks fir'd from straggling parties near
 'S assailed, no living remnant of the foe
 By either is discern'd ; none, none remain,
 Save the dead bodies of the gory slain. 400

“ Who thither comes ?” “ ’Tis Hyder, Mahmed’s son,
Lord of the fortress which we now have won :
In yonder tow’r we found him hid ; around
Him twenty firm adherents stood, who’d found
That hope which all their brethren now had lost,
In his lov’d presence. As a little host
They circled round him ; to surrender ne’er,
Unless his life were giv’n, vehement sware.
Their faithfulness, admiring ’twas resolv’d
Their master thus far should be then absolv’d.”

The strife is ended. Lo, they muster near.
Our hero doth not in the ranks appear !
See, see, he there within the gateway lies,
Pale, bleeding, speechless : hasten, or he dies !
Now gently, gently lift his valiant head :
Life hath not from the ruined mansion fled.
Oh ! sorely hath the Affghan sabre wrought
On him, who fearlessly its contact sought.
Behold his gaping cheek, his shatter’d arm,
His breast pierc’d ’midst the fury of the storm ; 420
And mourn the shatter’d fabric, mourn the might
Here lost, to be no more display’d in fight.
Now to the hospital your burden bear ;

He well deserves solicitude and care.
Alas ! 'tis Hope's necessitous decree,
His arm e'en from the shoulder sever'd be :
This can alone the vital guest detain ;
Life must be purchas'd with increase of pain.

He lies not here alone, for many a wound
His vet'ran comrades have in Ghuzni found.
But ah ! *he* may no more the falchion wield,
Each martial transport now to HIM is seal'd.

Britannia triumphs o'er the Affghans' might,
Claims o'er the fortress undisputed right :
'Tis won, 'tis won ; our banner floats on high ;
Around the bastions, lo, our streamers fly ;
That standard which has wav'd o'er ev'ry land.
See, o'er this citadel its folds expand.
GHUZNI, the rock of pride, hath fall'n to-day ;
Ye sons of glory, lift the wild hurra ! 440
The world henceforth shall tremble at your name,
Its very fears assert your mighty fame.
Another prize Britannia here hath won :
Where, struggling, hath she not triumphant shone ?

C A N T O VIII.

ARGUMENT.

RETURN TO HINDOSTAN—DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE—VOYAGE—ARRIVAL IN
ENGLAND—THE HERO VISITS THE SCENE OF HIS BIRTH—CONCLUSION.

" How the deep patriot feeling is impress'd—
Time cannot quench it—in the human breast !
" ————— 'Tis Nature's voice appeals,
Breathes to the bosom, glowing while it feels,—
Telling a tale of love, of those fond few,
Tho' far remov'd, still near to rapture's view ;
They are the links that bind the parted soul,
Rise in its dreams, and all its thoughts controul :
And, when returning to his parent soil,
Where time and death have been and shar'd their spoil ;
Where hearts once lov'd lie cradled now in sleep ;
Where breasts forget their feelings, once so deep, —
With what a pensive joy, half bliss, half pain,
He treads those scenes of youthful love again !"

CANTO VIII.

WHEN looks the valiant soldier on the field,
To which his country hath in him appeal'd ;
And, as he quits the scene and leaves behind
The judgment-place, the contest calls to mind ;
What rapture born of earth may his outvie ?
He sees Britannia's guardian angel nigh,
Feels that his arm has 'stablish'd firm her seat,
And prov'd her name a bulwark 'gainst defeat ;
Preserv'd the light her foes conspir'd to cloud,
And wrapt their pow'r in an eternal shroud.
Then swells the soul with triumph, and the heart
Throbs with pure ecstasy ; unfelt the smart
Of wounds corporeal ; for, if gracious Fate,
How glorious is his portion, and how great !
Deeds worthy of his ancestors have won

For him the title of a true-born son ;
Heav'n's genial smile, and Honour's loftiest throne,
Bas'd on a nation's gratitude, secur'd his own.

Yet higher transport he is taught to know,
Who hath repeatedly dealt forth the blow 20
Which levels the gaunt foe to the earth ;
When, as long years of arduous toil give birth
To feebleness, he backward turns his gaze ;
Each valiant enterprize of by-gone days,
Each wondrous incident recalls ; again
His charger mounts, and o'er the battle-plain
Pursues ; or climbs the rugged mountain's side,
An enemy to meet ; or cleaves the tide ;
Or steals in silence through the mists of night,
By strategy t' oppose superior might :
And, as each scar, confirming mem'ry's tale,
Bears witness that he never knew to quail,
Sees fair Britannia with extended arms,
In all the radiant lustre of her charms,
Invite him, as a dear and faithful son,
To that repose his val'rous acts have won,
In streams of immortality to lave,
And fraternize with the exalted brave.

Such transports rose within our hero's breast,
Each grievance slew, each seeming wrong redrest, 40
As tedious years successive now brought nigh
The hour for which he oft had heav'd a sigh.
Well do his furrow'd cheek and wrinkled brow
Age premature, induc'd by suffering, shew :
The vigour of his loins has long since fled,
Chill'd is his blood, and his ambition dead.
Yet, to behold again his native land—
The thought is pow'rful as enchantment's wand ;
Each feeble energy endues with might,
The soul arouses; and illumines the sight.
“ What bliss, to greet once more each youthful friend,
Who has outbrav'd the storms which life attend ;
A brother hail each vet'ran of the sword,
Again to former comrades be restor'd !
What joy, to breathe once more my native air,
Enjoy a warm fireside, and good old English fare !

Adieu Hindostan ! by thy torrid clime
Have I matur'd, and wither'd in my prime ;
In thee have tasted joys before unknown,
But many mourn'd which hence have from me flown : 60
I part with thee at last without regret,

Yet I lament not we have ever met.”
Thus spake our hero as the morn arose
Which brought his toils and labours to a close ;
On which he laid aside the trusty sword,
So long belov’d, rever’d, almost ador’d,
And doff’d the vest which had been e’er his pride,
Proclaiming him unto the brave allied.
The warning bell declares a fav’ring wind,
Calls all on board who would a passage find :
One kiss his sabre and his sabretash,
One tender glance he gives his coat and sash ;
Then to the coast departs, and soon is borne
Away from scenes to which he’ll ne’er return.

Fades the vast continent : alone the view
Presents the wat’ry and ethereal blue.
A second adolescence ocean lends ;
Health on Zephyrus’ downy wing attends :
Melodious strains awake the aquose waste,
As gaily o’er its traceless paths they haste : 80
Thoughts, as each moment brings them nearer home,
In search of joys precursive thither roam ;
Mirth thro’ the heart, and gladness thro’ the soul,
In undulary waves of pleasure roll ;

Anticipation e'en o'erwhelms the mind,
As scuds it swiftly on before the wind;
Joys long forgotten from oblivion rise,
In forms delightful to the wearied eyes,
Proclaim themselves a part of their estate,
Henceforth around them destin'd e'er to wait ;
While beauteous scenes are pictur'd to the view,
Which hope suggests are graphic, faithful, true.

But what intense anxieties arise,
When clouds foreboding veil in gloom the skies ;
When bright Apollo yields to Boreas' sway
The all-resplendent regions of the day ;
When o'er the horizon Jove uplifts his voice,
And gath'ring whirlwinds boist'rously rejoice,
While now and then a flash relieves the gloom,
But leaves behind the darkness of the tomb !
Reluctant Hope, with melancholy mien, 100
Expands her wings, and flies the mournful scene ;
Despair sits scowling on each billow's crest,
And Horror wakes within the timid breast ;
Each foaming wave annihilation breathes,
And Sadness round the brow her thorny garland wreathes.

The seat of liberty, the throne of might,
 Sweet Albion greets at length the raptur'd sight.
 O who th' o'erflowings of the heart may sing,
 When bursts its confines th' heav'n-descending spring,
 Of patriotism, pure as 'tis divine ?
 In silence at the universal shrine
 Of gratitude some fall with joyous tears ;
 While others lift their voices to the spheres
 In exultation not to be restrain'd :
 Throughout the day, and until light hath wan'd,
 Stands one, abstracted, with continuous gaze
 Upon the headland fix'd, while others praise
 In terms enthusiastic the bright scene :—
 No pow'r on earth the Briton's soul can wean
 From that dear land whence he his being drew, 120
 To which continues he for ever true ;
 And thus in various manner all express
 Feelings 'tis Nature's mandate none suppress.

Then as the view becomes more clear, arise
 Distinctly objects which enchain the eyes,
 The hour recalling when our sad farewells
 To these were wafted ; now each smiling tells
 Our near approach to home : the merry bells

}

Peal forth in strains ecstatic to the ear,
 And news of sympathetic gladness bear :
 The hum of commerce loads the passing breeze
 With welcomes from the mistress of the seas ;
 Each sportive wave that mirrors Phœbus' beams
 With smile of sweet congratulation gleams ;
 Each barren rock its rugged features smooths ;
 Each verdant spot anxieties' fears soothes :
 The heart is throbbing, and the pulses beat,
 And life itself seems doubly, trebly sweet,
 As o'er the eye prophetic visions roll
 In warm congeniality of soul.

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Now is an anch'rage in the harbour gain'd,
 The hope is realiz'd which oft has life sustain'd.

“ And do I stand again upon thy coast,
 And may I of thy smiling presence boast ?
 O queen of nations, hear a wand'rer's pray'r,
 Be this, thy sacred isle, my portion e'er !
 How few who left with me this blissful shore
 Do Time and Fortune now with me restore !
 Some lie 'midst gory heaps of graveless slain,
 And some in undistinguish'd tombs remain ;
 Some buried deep amidst the Affghan snows,

And other's dust borne on each wind that blows ;
O Jove, to thee my sacrifice is due ;
Thou pointed'st out my path, and thou hast led me thro' !”

Our hero thus, as all around he gaz'd
And meditated, God the Gracious prais'd.
And now determines he to seek the spot
Where Nature kindly cast his infant lot,
Which witness'd all those raptures of the boy,
Whose mem'ry nought in manhood could destory. 160
True, tares and thorns sprang up and chok'd the seed :
But where on earth grows not some bitter weed ?
Dear the remembrance of that lovely spot,
Till all of earth be in immortal scenes forgot !

*

His journey he commences : how much chang'd
The land from which he's been so long estrang'd !
On plains inhospitable hamlets rise ;
Extensive cities meet the wond'ring eyes
Which he remembers villages ; new roads
Are found (while each th' advance of science bodes,
Increase of population, wealth) ; and man
A new creation seems to have began.
E'en Nature sympathises with the change,

And here and there assumes a feature strange ;
But to our hero kind her smile retains,
Amidst his native hills and vales and plains.

Behold, the hallow'd vision greets his sight,
Deck'd in the gorgeous robe of summer bright :
“ It is the same—the very same ! ”—he cries,
When he the dwelling of his youth espies. 180
“ There stands the house beneath whose grateful roof
“ I stood from ev'ry evil far aloof ;
“ Whose halls resounded with mine infant voice,
“ When Innocency bade me still rejoice ;
“ Which witness'd oft the transports of a love
“ Whose rich perfection I was ne'er to prove ;
“ And which I left in sorrow; guilt, and shame,
“ When I an alien to its joys became.
“ These are the vales 'midst which I wander'd oft
“ With her I lov'd, engag'd in converse soft ;
“ Whence many a flow'r to deck her sunny hair
“ I pluck'd, declaring she was far more fair ;
“ Yon is the grot, our noon-day's choice retreat,
“ Where ofttime we repos'd in languor sweet ;
“ And yon the fountain whose translucent stream
“ Refresh'd when wand'ring 'neath the sultry beam :

“ Here, here will I henceforth abide, and crave,
“ When death shall come, that this may be my grave!”

Here then at length the Soldier's wand'rings end ;
Peace, plenty, comfort, hither him attend ! 200
E'en as the gallant ship which oft has brav'd
The storm, o'er which in battle oft has wav'd
The British flag 'mid thickest of the fight,
When worn and shatter'd and depriv'd of might,
A haven seeks, a refuge safe in port ;
Is priz'd and treasur'd, while the proud report
Of mighty deeds by her perform'd to Fame
Is giv'n, and veneration to her name :
So 'midst the sons of peace our vet'rans find
Shelter in age from each inclement wind ;
By all esteem'd, alike by all rever'd,
Whoe'er their oft-recited tales have heard.
When congregating round the blazing hearth,
'Midst cheerful scenes and laughter-waking mirth,
The tale of conflict hushes ev'ry sound,
And all in eager interest are bound ;
Each movement well and acc'rately's pourtray'd,
And all the glorious scene before them laid ;
Each to the field enthusiasm bears,

The cannon seems to thunder in their ears, 220
And cavalcade on cavalcade appears ;
The rival banners float before their eyes,
The valiant combat, and the craven dies ;—
How glorious then the triumph which he feels,
Who to his scars as witnesses appeals !

Arise, ye aspirants for martial fame,
Within whose bosoms glows this ardent flame ;
Go boldly forth and act the Briton well,
So ye one day a sim'lar tale may tell ;
May boast that ye were present on the field
When Britain's might in glory was reveal'd ;
That ye have added lustre to her arms,
Stood boldly forth the champions of her charms,
Compell'd her foes to crouch for mercy down,
Live on her favour, perish 'neath her frown ;
To generations yet to come may tell
How he stood near him when a Picton fell ;
With patriotic pride the wounds display,
Which then ye found amidst the bloody fray ;
And in the arms of peace lay down the life 240
Which has been sacred to your country's strife.

But venture not, ye who anticipate
In indolence your souls to satiate,
To wander like some fairy prince thro' groves
Of bright enchantment, sipping houris' loves ;
Your minds, with romance fill'd, behold afar
But the concentrated radiance of our star.
If ye would warriors be, ye must resign
Those false conceits which make war seem divine ;
Go forth prepar'd to combat ev'ry ill,
And cheerfully the cup of pleasure spill.

O ye who dwell where wealth and peace abide,
Yet discontent admit and fortune chide,
Look on THE SOLDIER ! think that 'tis for you,
He first bids all the joys of home adieu ;
For you, with bursting but undaunted soul,
Goes forth to spill his blood at either pole ;
Wanders the East and traverses the West,
The ocean roams, and ne'er demands to rest ;
To storms, disease, to heat, to cold, exposed,
While ev'ry av'nue of escape is closed :
Then doubly prize the comforts ye possess ;
Be grateful and contented ; heav'n will bless.

O thou who dost upon the soldier sneer,
Henceforth let e'en his name to thee be dear ;
His fault, his follies, whatsoe'er they be,
Should meet with pardon, with advice from thee.
If ignorant and rude, he feels the force
Of nature, listens to the heart's discourse ;
If giddy, wild, his passions can submit,
While they obey the spur, to curb and bit ;
And if licentious, it seems half excus'd
In one to taste domestic sweets refus'd.

Warriors, who bear the musket, sword, or spear,
Be patient, hopeful, zealous ; persevere !
Let strict obedience ever be your guide,
To discipline inseparably allied ;
Let pure sobriety your steps attend,
Be guardian of your morals, tutor, friend ;
Let ev'ry martial virtue wait around,
And spotless motives in the rear be found :
Be yours the dauntless and unclouded brow,
The resolute eye, the heart no fear to know ;
Be yours determination, stern resolve :
Such virtues may a thousand faults absolve.

When all memorial of those fields is lost,
On which ye shine, earth's choicest, mightiest host,
Your deeds shall be embalm'd in hist'ry's page,
The admiration of a world engage ;
And diff'ring nations join with loud acclaim
To celebrate THE BRITISH SOLDIER's name.

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THE END.

Shortly will be Published

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“THE SOLDIER,”

SONGS

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the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

The public sector has also become a major employer of women. In 1980, women made up 40% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 50%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of women in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services. The public sector has also become a major employer of young people, with the number of young people employed in the public sector increasing from 1.5 million in 1980 to 2.5 million in 1995.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people with disabilities. In 1980, people with disabilities made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people with disabilities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from ethnic minorities. In 1980, people from ethnic minorities made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from ethnic minorities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower social classes. In 1980, people from the lower social classes made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower social classes in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower income groups. In 1980, people from the lower income groups made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower income groups in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower education levels. In 1980, people from the lower education levels made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower education levels in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower health status. In 1980, people from the lower health status made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower health status in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower life expectancy. In 1980, people from the lower life expectancy made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower life expectancy in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower quality of life. In 1980, people from the lower quality of life made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this figure had risen to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower quality of life in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.